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WITHDRAWN

THE LION AND THE UNICORN

Instead . . . buried her face in its folds.

THE LION AND THE UNICORN

BY

RICHARD HARDING DAVIS

ILLUSTRATED BY

Howard Chandler Christy

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
NEW YORK:::::::::::::::: 1905

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IN MEMORY OF

MANY HOT DAYS AND SOME HOT CORNERS

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO

LIEUT.-COL. ARTHUR H. LEE, R.A.

BRITISH MILITARY ATTACHÉ WITH THE

UNITED STATES ARMY

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*** In this volume are included "Cinderella," "Miss Delamar's Understudy," "The Editor's Story," and "An Assisted Emigrant," heretofore published in the volume entitled "Cinderella and Other Stories."

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THE LION AND THE UNICORN

The Lion and the Unicorn

PRENTISS had a long lease on the house, and because it stood in Jermyn Street the upper floors were, as a matter of course, turned into lodgings for single gentlemen; and because Prentiss was a Florist to the Queen, he placed a lion and unicorn over his flower-shop, just in front of the middle window on the first floor. By stretching a little, each of them could see into the window just beyond him, and could hear all that was said inside; and such things as they saw and heard during the reign of Captain Carrington, who moved in at the same time they did! By day the table in the centre of the room was covered with maps, and the Captain sat with a box of pins, with different-colored flags wrapped around them, and amused himself by sticking them in the maps and measuring the spaces in between, swearing meanwhile to himself. It was a selfish amusement, but it appeared to be the Captain's only intellectual pursuit, for at night the maps were rolled up, and a green cloth was spread across the table, and there was much company and popping of soda-bottles,

and little heaps of gold and silver were moved this way and that across the cloth. The smoke drifted out of the open windows, and the laughter of the Captain's guests rang out loudly in the empty street, so that the policeman halted and raised his eyes reprovingly to the lighted windows, and cabmen drew up beneath them and lay in wait, dozing on their folded arms, for the Captain's guests to depart. The Lion and the Unicorn were rather ashamed of the scandal of it, and they were glad when, one day, the Captain went away with his tin boxes and gun-cases piled high on a four-wheeler.

Prentiss stood on the sidewalk and said, "I wish you good luck, sir." And the Captain said, "I'm coming back a Major, Prentiss." But he never came back. And one day—the Lion remembered the day very well, for on that same day the newsboys ran up and down Jermyn Street shouting out the news of "a 'orrible disaster" to the British arms. It was then that a young lady came to the door in a hansom, and Prentiss went out to meet her and led her upstairs. They heard him unlock the Captain's door and say, "This is his room, miss," and after he had gone they watched her standing quite still by the centre-table. She stood there for a very long time looking slowly about her, and then she took a photograph of the Captain from the frame on the mantel and slipped

it into her pocket, and when she went out again her veil was down, and she was crying. She must have given Prentiss as much as a sovereign, for he called her "Your ladyship," which he never did under a sovereign.

And she drove off, and they never saw her again either, nor could they hear the address she gave the cabman. But it was somewhere up St. John's Wood way.

After that the rooms were empty for some months, and the Lion and the Unicorn were forced to amuse themselves with the beautiful ladies and smart-looking men who came to Prentiss to buy flowers and "buttonholes," and the little round baskets of strawberries, and even the peaches at three shillings each, which looked so tempting as they lay in the window, wrapped up in cotton-wool, like jewels of great price.

Then Philip Carroll, the American gentleman, came, and they heard Prentiss telling him that those rooms had always let for five guineas a week, which they knew was not true; but they also knew that in the economy of nations there must always be a higher price for the rich American, or else why was he given that strange accent, except to betray him into the hands of the London shopkeeper, and the London cabby?

The American walked to the window toward

the west, which was the window nearest the Lion, and looked out into the graveyard of St. James's Church, that stretched between their street and Piccadilly.

"You're lucky in having a bit of green to look out on," he said to Prentiss. "I'll take these rooms —at five guineas. That's more than they're worth, you know, but as I know it, too, your conscience needn't trouble you."

Then his eyes fell on the Lion, and he nodded to him gravely. "How do you do?" he said. "I'm coming to live with you for a little time. I have read about you and your friends over there. It is a hazard of new fortunes with me, your Majesty, so be kind to me, and if I win, I will put a new coat of paint on your shield and gild you all over again."

Prentiss smiled obsequiously at the American's pleasantry, but the new lodger only stared at him.

"He seemed a social gentleman," said the Unicorn, that night, when the Lion and he were talking it over. "Now the Captain, the whole time he was here, never gave us so much as a look. This one says he has read of us."

"And why not?" growled the Lion. "I hope Prentiss heard what he said of our needing a new layer of gilt. It's disgraceful. You can see that Lion over Scarlett's, the butcher, as far as Regent

Street, and Scarlett is only one of Salisbury's creations. He received his Letters-Patent only two years back. We date from Palmerston."

The lodger came up the street just at that moment, and stopped and looked up at the Lion and the Unicorn from the sidewalk, before he opened the door with his night-key. They heard him enter the room and feel on the mantel for his pipe, and a moment later he appeared at the Lion's window and leaned on the sill, looking down into the street below and blowing whiffs of smoke up into the warm night-air.

It was a night in June, and the pavements were dry under foot and the streets were filled with well-dressed people, going home from the play, and with groups of men in black and white, making their way to supper at the clubs. Hansoms of inky-black, with shining lamps inside and out, dashed noiselessly past on mysterious errands, chasing close on each other's heels on a mad race, each to its separate goal. From the cross streets rose the noises of early night, the rumble of the 'buses, the creaking of their brakes as they unlocked, the cries of the "extras," and the merging of thousands of human voices in a dull murmur. The great world of London was closing its shutters for the night and putting out the lights; and the new lodger from across the sea listened to it

with his heart beating quickly, and laughed to stifle the touch of fear and homesickness that rose in him.

"I have seen a great play to-night," he said to the Lion, "nobly played by great players. What will they care for my poor wares? I see that I have been over-bold. But we cannot go back now —not yet."

He knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and nodded "good-night" to the great world beyond his window. "What fortunes lie with ye, ye lights of London town?" he quoted, smiling. And they heard him close the door of his bedroom, and lock it for the night.

The next morning he bought many geraniums from Prentiss and placed them along the broad cornice that stretched across the front of the house over the shop-window. The flowers made a band of scarlet on either side of the Lion as brilliant as a Tommy's jacket.

"I am trying to propitiate the British Lion by placing flowers before his altar," the American said that morning to a visitor.

"The British public, you mean," said the visitor; "they are each likely to tear you to pieces."

"Yes, I have heard that the pit on the first night of a bad play is something awful," hazarded the American.

"Wait and see," said the visitor.

"Thank you," said the American, meekly.

Everyone who came to the first floor front talked about a play. It seemed to be something of great moment to the American. It was only a bundle of leaves printed in red and black inks and bound in brown paper covers. There were two of them, and the American called them by different names: one was his comedy and one was his tragedy.

"They are both likely to be tragedies," the Lion heard one of the visitors say to another, as they drove away together. "Our young friend takes it too seriously."

The American spent most of his time by his desk at the window writing on little blue pads and tearing up what he wrote, or in reading over one of the plays to himself in a loud voice. In time the number of his visitors increased, and to some of these he would read his play; and after they had left him he was either depressed and silent or excited and jubilant. The Lion could always tell when he was happy because then he would go to the side table and pour himself out a drink and say, "Here's to me," but when he was depressed he would stand holding the glass in his hand, and finally pour the liquor back into the bottle again and say, "What's the use of that?"

After he had been in London a month he wrote less and was more frequently abroad, sallying forth in beautiful raiment, and coming home by daylight.

And he gave suppers too, but they were less noisy than the Captain's had been, and the women who came to them were much more beautiful, and their voices when they spoke were sweet and low. Sometimes one of the women sang, and the men sat in silence while the people in the street below stopped to listen, and would say, "Why, that is So-and-So singing," and the Lion and the Unicorn wondered how they could know who it was when they could not see her.

The lodger's visitors came to see him at all hours. They seemed to regard his rooms as a club, where they could always come for a bite to eat or to write notes; and others treated it like a lawyer's office and asked advice on all manner of strange subjects. Sometimes the visitor wanted to know whether the American thought she ought to take £10 a week and go on tour, or stay in town and try to live on £8; or whether she should paint landscapes that would not sell, or race-horses that would; or whether Reggie really loved her and whether she really loved Reggie; or whether the new part in the piece at the Court was better than the old part at Terry's, and wasn't she getting too old to play "ingénues" anyway.

The lodger seemed to be a general adviser, and smoked and listened with grave consideration, and the Unicorn thought his judgment was most sympathetic and sensible.

Of all the beautiful ladies who came to call on the lodger the one the Unicorn liked the best was the one who wanted to know whether she loved Reggie and whether Reggie loved her. She discussed this so interestingly while she consumed tea and thin slices of bread that the Unicorn almost lost his balance in leaning forward to listen. Her name was Marion Cavendish, and it was written over many photographs which stood in silver frames in the lodger's rooms. She used to make the tea herself, while the lodger sat and smoked; and she had a fascinating way of doubling the thin slices of bread into long strips and nibbling at them like a mouse at a piece of cheese. She had wonderful little teeth and Cupid's-bow lips, and she had a fashion of lifting her veil only high enough for one to see the two Cupid-bow lips. When she did that the American used to laugh, at nothing apparently, and say, "Oh, I guess Reggie loves you well enough."

"But do I love Reggie?" she would ask, sadly, with her teacup held poised in air.

"I am sure I hope not," the lodger would reply, and she would put down the veil quickly, as

one would drop a curtain over a beautiful picture, and rise with great dignity and say, "If you talk like that I shall not come again."

She was sure that if she could only get some work to do her head would be filled with more important matters than whether Reggie loved her or not.

"But the managers seem inclined to cut their cavendish very fine just at present," she said. "If I don't get a part soon," she announced, "I shall ask Mitchell to put me down on the list for recitations at evening parties."

"That seems a desperate revenge," said the American; "and besides, I don't want you to get a part, because someone might be idiotic enough to take my comedy, and if he should, you must play *Nancy*."

"I would not ask for any salary if I could play *Nancy*," Miss Cavendish answered.

They spoke of a great many things, but their talk always ended by her saying that there must be someone with sufficient sense to see that his play was a great play, and by his saying that none but she must play *Nancy*.

The Lion preferred the tall girl with masses and folds of brown hair, who came from America to paint miniatures of the British aristocracy. Her name was Helen Cabot, and he liked her because

Consumed tea and thin slices of bread.

she was so brave and fearless, and so determined to be independent of everyone, even of the lodger — especially of the lodger, who, it appeared, had known her very well at home. The lodger, they gathered, did not wish her to be independent of him, and the two Americans had many arguments and disputes about it, but she always said, "It does no good, Philip; it only hurts us both when you talk so. I care for nothing, and for no one but my art, and, poor as it is, it means everything to me, and you do not, and, of course, the man I am to marry, must." Then Carroll would talk, walking up and down, and looking very fierce and determined, and telling her how he loved her in such a way that it made her look even more proud and beautiful. And she would say more gently, "It is very fine to think that anyone can care for me like that, and very helpful. But unless I cared in the same way it would be wicked of me to marry you, and besides—" She would add very quickly to prevent his speaking again—"I don't want to marry you or anybody, and I never shall. I want to be free and to succeed in my work, just as you want to succeed in your work. So please never speak of this again." When she went away the lodger used to sit smoking in the big arm-chair and beat the arms with his hands, and he would pace up and down the room, while his work would

lie untouched and his engagements pass forgotten.

Summer came and London was deserted, dull, and dusty, but the lodger stayed on in Jermyn Street. Helen Cabot had departed on a round of visits to country-houses in Scotland, where, as she wrote him, she was painting miniatures of her hosts and studying the game of golf. Miss Cavendish divided her days between the river and one of the West End theatres. She was playing a small part in a farce-comedy.

One day she came up from Cookham earlier than usual, looking very beautiful in a white boating-frock and a straw hat with a Leander ribbon. Her hands and arms were hard with dragging a punting-pole, and she was sunburnt and happy, and hungry for tea.

"Why don't you come down to Cookham and get out of this heat?" Miss Cavendish asked. "You need it; you look ill."

"I'd like to, but I can't," said Carroll. "The fact is, I paid in advance for these rooms, and if I lived anywhere else I'd be losing five guineas a week on them."

Miss Cavendish regarded him severely. She had never quite mastered his American humor.

"But—five guineas—why, that's nothing to you," she said. Something in the lodger's face made her pause. "You don't mean——"

"Yes, I do," said the lodger, smiling. "You see, I started in to lay siege to London without sufficient ammunition. London is a large town, and it didn't fall as quickly as I thought it would. So I am economizing. Mr. Lockhart's Coffee Rooms and I are no longer strangers."

Miss Cavendish put down her cup of tea untasted and leaned toward him.

"Are you in earnest?" she asked. "For how long?"

"Oh, for the last month," replied the lodger; "they are not at all bad—clean and wholesome and all that."

"But the suppers you gave us, and this," she cried, suddenly, waving her hands over the pretty tea-things, "and the cake and muffins?"

"My friends, at least," said Carroll, "need not go to Lockhart's."

"And the Savoy?" asked Miss Cavendish, mournfully shaking her head.

"A dream of the past," said Carroll, waving his pipe through the smoke. "Gatti's? Yes, on special occasions; but for necessity the Chancellor's, where one gets a piece of the prime roast beef of Old England, from Chicago, and potatoes for ninepence—a pot of bitter twopence-halfpenny, and a penny for the waiter. It's most amusing on the whole. I am learning a little about

London, and some things about myself. They are both most interesting subjects."

"Well, I don't like it," Miss Cavendish declared, helplessly. "When I think of those suppers and the flowers, I feel—I feel like a robber."

"Don't," begged Carroll. "I am really the most happy of men—that is, as the chap says in the play, I would be if I wasn't so damned miserable. But I owe no man a penny and I have assets—I have £80 to last me through the winter and two marvellous plays; and I love, next to yourself, the most wonderful woman God ever made. That's enough."

"But I thought you made such a lot of money by writing?" asked Miss Cavendish.

"I do—that is, I could," answered Carroll, "if I wrote the things that sell; but I keep on writing plays that won't."

"And such plays!" exclaimed Marion, warmly; "and to think that they are going begging." She continued, indignantly, "I can't imagine what the managers do want."

"I know what they don't want," said the American. Miss Cavendish drummed impatiently on the tea-tray.

"I wish you wouldn't be so abject about it," she said. "If I were a man I'd make them take those plays."

"How?" asked the American; "with a gun?"

"Well, I'd keep at it until they read them," declared Marion. "I'd sit on their front steps all night and I'd follow them in cabs, and I'd lie in wait for them at the stage-door. I'd just make them take them."

Carroll sighed and stared at the ceiling. "I guess I'll give up and go home," he said.

"Oh, yes, do, run away before you are beaten," said Miss Cavendish, scornfully. "Why, you can't go now. Everybody will be back in town soon, and there are a lot of new plays coming on, and some of them are sure to be failures, and that's our chance. You rush in with your piece, and somebody may take it sooner than close the theatre."

"I'm thinking of closing the theatre myself," said Carroll. "What's the use of my hanging on here?" he exclaimed. "It distresses Helen to know I am in London, feeling about her as I do —and the Lord only knows how it distresses me. And, maybe, if I went away," he said, consciously, "she might miss me. She might see the difference."

Miss Cavendish held herself erect and pressed her lips together with a severe smile. "If Helen Cabot doesn't see the difference between you and the other men she knows now," she said, "I doubt

if she ever will. Besides—" she continued, and then hesitated.

"Well, go on," urged Carroll.

"Well, I was only going to say," she explained, "that leaving the girl alone never did the man any good unless he left her alone willingly. If she's sure he still cares, it's just the same to her where he is. He might as well stay on in London as go to South Africa. It won't help him any. The difference comes when she finds he has stopped caring. Why, look at Reggie. He tried that. He went away for ever so long, but he kept writing me from wherever he went, so that he was perfectly miserable—and I went on enjoying myself. Then when he came back, he tried going about with his old friends again. He used to come to the theatre with them—oh, with such nice girls!—but he always stood in the back of the box and yawned and scowled—so I knew. And, anyway, he'd always spoil it all by leaving them and waiting at the stage entrance for me. But one day he got tired of the way I treated him and went off on a bicycle-tour with Lady Hacksher's girls and some men from his regiment, and he was gone three weeks, and never sent me even a line; and I got so scared; I couldn't sleep, and I stood it for three days more, and then I wired him to come back or I'd jump off London Bridge; and he came back

that very night from Edinburgh on the express, and I was so glad to see him that I got confused, and in the general excitement I promised to marry him, so that's how it was with us."

"Yes," said the American, without enthusiasm; "but then I still care, and Helen knows I care."

"Doesn't she ever fancy that you might care for someone else? You have a lot of friends, you know."

"Yes, but she knows they are just that—friends," said the American.

Miss Cavendish stood up to go, and arranged her veil before the mirror above the fireplace.

"I come here very often to tea," she said.

"It's very kind of you," said Carroll. He was at the open window, looking down into the street for a cab.

"Well, no one knows I am engaged to Reggie," continued Miss Cavendish, "except you and Reggie, and he isn't so sure. *She* doesn't know it."

"Well?" said Carroll.

Miss Cavendish smiled a mischievous kindly smile at him from the mirror.

"Well?" she repeated, mockingly. Carroll stared at her and laughed. After a pause he said: "It's like a plot in a comedy. But I'm afraid I'm too serious for play-acting."

"Yes, it is serious," said Miss Cavendish. She seated herself again and regarded the American thoughtfully. "You are too good a man to be treated the way that girl is treating you, and no one knows it better than she does. She'll change in time, but just now she thinks she wants to be independent. She's in love with this picture-painting idea, and with the people she meets. It's all new to her—the fuss they make over her and the titles, and the way she is asked about. We know she can't paint. We know they only give her commissions because she's so young and pretty, and American. She amuses them, that's all. Well, that cannot last; she'll find it out. She's too clever a girl, and she is too fine a girl to be content with that long. Then—then she'll come back to you. She feels now that she has both you and the others, and she's making you wait; so wait and be cheerful. She's worth waiting for; she's young, that's all. She'll see the difference in time. But, in the meanwhile, it would hurry matters a bit if she thought she had to choose between the new friends and you."

"She could still keep her friends and marry me," said Carroll; "I have told her that a hundred times. She could still paint miniatures and marry me. But she won't marry me."

"She won't marry you because she knows she

can whenever she wants to," cried Marion. "Can't you see that? But if she thought you were going to marry someone else now?"

"She would be the first to congratulate me," said Carroll. He rose and walked to the fireplace, where he leaned with his arm on the mantel. There was a photograph of Helen Cabot near his hand, and he turned this toward him and stood for some time staring at it. "My dear Marion," he said at last, "I've known Helen ever since she was as young as that. Every year I've loved her more, and found new things in her to care for; now I love her more than any other man ever loved any other woman."

Miss Cavendish shook her head sympathetically.

"Yes, I know," she said; "that's the way Reggie loves me, too."

Carroll went on as though he had not heard her.

"There's a bench in St. James's Park," he said, "where we used to sit when she first came here, when she didn't know so many people. We used to go there in the morning and throw penny buns to the ducks. That's been my amusement this summer since you've all been away—sitting on that bench, feeding penny buns to the silly ducks—especially the black one, the one she used to like

best. And I make pilgrimages to all the other places we ever visited together, and try to pretend she is with me. And I support the crossing sweeper at Lansdowne Passage because she once said she felt sorry for him. I do all the other absurd things that a man in love tortures himself by doing. But to what end? She knows how I care, and yet she won't see why we can't go on being friends as we once were. What's the use of it all?"

"She is young, I tell you," repeated Miss Cavendish, "and she's too sure of you. You've told her you care; now try making her think you don't care."

Carroll shook his head impatiently.

"I will not stoop to such tricks and pretence, Marion," he cried, impatiently. "All I have is my love for her; if I have to cheat and to trap her into caring, the whole thing would be degraded."

Miss Cavendish shrugged her shoulders and walked to the door. "Such amateurs!" she exclaimed, and banged the door after her.

Carroll never quite knew how he had come to make a confidante of Miss Cavendish. Helen and he had met her when they first arrived in London, and as she had acted for a season in the United States, she adopted the two Americans—and told

Helen where to go for boots and hats, and advised Carroll about placing his plays. Helen soon made other friends, and deserted the artists with whom her work had first thrown her. She seemed to prefer the society of the people who bought her paintings, and who admired and made much of the painter. As she was very beautiful and at an age when she enjoyed everything in life keenly and eagerly, to give her pleasure was in itself a distinct pleasure; and the worldly tired people she met were considering their own entertainment quite as much as hers when they asked her to their dinners and dances, or to spend a week with them in the country. In her way, she was as independent as was Carroll in his, and as she was not in love, as he was, her life was not narrowed down to but one ideal. But she was not so young as to consider herself infallible, and she had one excellent friend on whom she was dependent for advice and to whose directions she submitted implicitly. This was Lady Gower, the only person to whom Helen had spoken of Carroll and of his great feeling for her. Lady Gower, immediately after her marriage, had been a conspicuous and brilliant figure in that set in London which works eighteen hours a day to keep itself amused, but after the death of her husband she had disappeared into the country as completely as though she had entered a con-

vent, and after several years had then re-entered the world as a professional philanthropist. Her name was now associated entirely with Women's Leagues, with committees that presented petitions to Parliament, and with public meetings, at which she spoke with marvellous ease and effect. Her old friends said she had taken up this new pose as an outlet for her nervous energies, and as an effort to forget the man who alone had made life serious to her. Others knew her as an earnest woman, acting honestly for what she thought was right. Her success, all admitted, was due to her knowledge of the world and to her sense of humor, which taught her with whom to use her wealth and position, and when to demand what she wanted solely on the ground that the cause was just.

She had taken more than a fancy for Helen, and the position of the beautiful, motherless girl had appealed to her as one filled with dangers. When she grew to know Helen better, she recognized that these fears were quite unnecessary, and as she saw more of her she learned to care for her deeply. Helen had told her much of Carroll and of his double purpose in coming to London; of his brilliant work and his lack of success in having it recognized; and of his great and loyal devotion to her, and of his lack of success, not in having

that recognized, but in her own inability to return it. Helen was proud that she had been able to make Carroll care for her as he did, and that there was anything about her which could inspire a man whom she admired so much to believe in her so absolutely and for so long a time. But what convinced her that the outcome for which he hoped was impossible, was the very fact that she could admire him, and see how fine and unselfish his love for her was, and yet remain untouched by it.

She had been telling Lady Gower one day of the care he had taken of her ever since she was fourteen years of age, and had quoted some of the friendly and loverlike acts he had performed in her service, until one day they had both found out that his attitude of the elder brother was no longer possible, and that he loved her in the old and only way. Lady Gower looked at her rather doubtfully and smiled.

"I wish you would bring him to see me, Helen," she said; "I think I should like your friend very much. From what you tell me of him I doubt if you will find many such men waiting for you in this country. Our men marry for reasons of property, or they love blindly, and are exacting and selfish before and after they are married. I know, because so many women came to me when my

husband was alive to ask how it was that I continued so happy in my married life."

"But I don't want to marry anyone," Helen remonstrated, gently. "American girls are not always thinking only of getting married."

"What I meant was this," said Lady Gower: "that, in my experience, I have heard of but few men who care in the way this young man seems to care for you. You say you do not love him; but if he had wanted to gain my interest, he could not have pleaded his cause better than you have done. He seems to see your faults and yet love you still, in spite of them—or on account of them. And I like the things he does for you. I like, for instance, his sending you the book of the moment every week for two years. That shows a most unswerving spirit of devotion. And the story of the broken bridge in the woods is a wonderful story. If I were a young girl, I could love a man for that alone. It was a beautiful thing to do."

Helen sat with her chin on her hands, deeply considering this new point of view.

"I thought it very foolish of him," she confessed, questioningly, "to take such a risk for such a little thing."

Lady Gower smiled down at her from the height of her many years.

"Wait," she said, dryly, "you are very young

now—and very rich; everyone is crowding to give you pleasure, to show his admiration. You are a very fortunate girl. But later, these things which some man has done because he loved you, and which you call foolish, will grow large in your life, and shine out strongly, and when you are discouraged and alone, you will take them out, and the memory of them will make you proud and happy. They are the honors which women wear in secret."

Helen came back to town in September, and for the first few days was so occupied in refurnishing her studio and in visiting the shops that she neglected to send Carroll word of her return. When she found that a whole week had passed without her having made any effort to see him, and appreciated how the fact would hurt her friend, she was filled with remorse, and drove at once in great haste to Jermyn Street, to announce her return in person. On the way she decided that she would soften the blow of her week of neglect by asking him to take her out to luncheon. This privilege she had once or twice accorded him, and she felt that the pleasure these excursions gave Carroll were worth the consternation they caused to Lady Gower.

The servant was uncertain whether Mr. Carroll was at home or not, but Helen was too intent

upon making restitution to wait for the fact to be determined, and, running up the stairs, knocked sharply at the door of his study.

A voice bade her come in, and she entered, radiant and smiling her welcome. But Carroll was not there to receive it, and, instead, Marion Cavendish looked up at her from his desk, where she was busily writing. Helen paused with a surprised laugh, but Marion sprang up and hailed her gladly. They met half way across the room and kissed each other with the most friendly feeling.

Philip was out, Marion said, and she had just stepped in for a moment to write him a note. If Helen would excuse her, she would finish it, as she was late for rehearsal.

But she asked over her shoulder, with great interest, if Helen had passed a pleasant summer. She thought she had never seen her looking so well. Helen thought Miss Cavendish herself was looking very well also, but Marion said no; that she was too sunburnt, she would not be able to wear a dinner-dress for a month. There was a pause while Marion's quill scratched violently across Carroll's note-paper. Helen felt that in some way she was being treated as an intruder; or worse, as a guest. She did not sit down, it seemed impossible to do so, but she moved uncertainly about

the room. She noted that there were many changes, it seemed more bare and empty; her picture was still on the writing-desk, but there were at least six new photographs of Marion. Marion herself had brought them to the room that morning, and had carefully arranged them in conspicuous places. But Helen could not know that. She thought there was an unnecessary amount of writing scribbled over the face of each.

Marion addressed her letter and wrote "Immediate" across the envelope, and placed it before the clock on the mantel-shelf. "You will find Philip looking very badly," she said, as she pulled on her gloves. "He has been in town all summer, working very hard—he has had no holiday at all. I don't think he's well. I have been a great deal worried about him," she added. Her face was bent over the buttons of her glove, and when she raised her blue eyes to Helen they were filled with serious concern.

"Really," Helen stammered, "I—I didn't know —in his letters he seemed very cheerful."

Marion shook her head and turned and stood looking thoughtfully out of the window. "He's in a very hard place," she began, abruptly, and then stopped as though she had thought better of what she intended to say. Helen tried to ask

her to go on, but could not bring herself to do so. She wanted to get away.

"I tell him he ought to leave London," Marion began again; "he needs a change and a rest."

"I should think he might," Helen agreed, "after three months of this heat. He wrote me he intended going to Herne Bay or over to Ostend."

"Yes, he had meant to go," Marion answered. She spoke with the air of one who possessed the most intimate knowledge of Carroll's movements and plans, and change of plans. "But he couldn't," she added. "He couldn't afford it. Helen," she said, turning to the other girl, dramatically, "do you know—I believe that Philip is very poor."

Miss Cabot exclaimed, incredulously, "Poor!" She laughed. "Why, what do you mean?"

"I mean that he has no money," Marion answered, sharply. "These rooms represent nothing. He only keeps them on because he paid for them in advance. He's been living on three shillings a day. That's poor for him. He takes his meals at cabmen's shelters and at Lockhart's, and he's been doing so for a month."

Helen recalled with a guilty thrill the receipt of certain boxes of La France roses—cut long, in the American fashion—which had arrived within the last month at various country-houses. She felt indignant at herself, and miserable. Her indigna-

tion was largely due to the recollection that she had given these flowers to her hostess to decorate the dinner-table.

She hated to ask this girl of things which she should have known better than anyone else. But she forced herself to do it. She felt she must know certainly and at once.

"How do you know this?" she asked. "Are you sure there is no mistake?"

"He told me himself," said Marion, "when he talked of letting the plays go and returning to America. He said he must go back; that his money was gone."

"He is gone to America!" Helen said, blankly.

"No, he wanted to go, but I wouldn't let him," Marion went on. "I told him that someone might take his play any day. And this third one he has written, the one he finished this summer in town, is the best of all, I think. It's a love-story. It's quite beautiful." She turned and arranged her veil at the glass, and as she did so, her eyes fell on the photographs of herself scattered over the mantel-piece, and she smiled slightly. But Helen did not see her—she was sitting down now, pulling at the books on the table. She was confused and disturbed by emotions which were quite strange to her, and when Marion bade her good-by she hardly noticed her departure. What im-

pressed her most of all in what Marion had told her was, she was surprised to find, that Philip was going away. That she herself had frequently urged him to do so, for his own peace of mind, seemed now of no consequence. Now that he seriously contemplated it, she recognized that his absence meant to her a change in everything. She felt for the first time the peculiar place he held in her life. Even if she had seen him but seldom, the fact that he was within call had been more of a comfort and a necessity to her than she understood.

That he was poor, concerned her chiefly because she knew that, although this condition could only be but temporary, it would distress him not to have his friends around him, and to entertain them as he had been used to do. She wondered eagerly if she might offer to help him, but a second thought assured her that, for a man, that sort of help from a woman was impossible.

She resented the fact that Marion was deep in his confidence; that it was Marion who had told her of his changed condition and of his plans. It annoyed her so acutely that she could not remain in the room where she had seen her so complacently in possession. And after leaving a brief note for Philip, she went away. She stopped a hansom at the door, and told the man to drive along the Em-

bankment—she wanted to be quite alone, and she felt she could see no one until she had thought it all out, and had analyzed the new feelings.

So for several hours she drove slowly up and down, sunk far back in the cushions of the cab, and staring with unseeing eyes at the white enamelled tariff and the black dash-board.

She assured herself that she was not jealous of Marion, because, in order to be jealous, she first would have to care for Philip in the very way she could not bring herself to do.

She decided that his interest in Marion hurt her, because it showed that Philip was not capable of remaining true to the one ideal of his life. She was sure that this explained her feelings—she was disappointed that he had not kept up to his own standard; that he was weak enough to turn aside from it for the first pretty pair of eyes. But she was too honest and too just to accept that diagnosis of her feelings as final—she knew there had been many pairs of eyes in America and in London, and that though Philip had seen them, he had not answered them when they spoke. No, she confessed frankly, she was hurt with herself for neglecting her old friend so selfishly and for so long a time; his love gave him claims on her consideration, at least, and she had forgotten that and him, and had run after strange gods and allowed others to come

in and take her place, and to give him the sympathy and help which she should have been the first to offer, and which would have counted more when coming from her than from anyone else. She determined to make amends at once for her thoughtlessness and selfishness, and her brain was pleasantly occupied with plans and acts of kindness. It was a new entertainment, and she found she delighted in it. She directed the cabman to go to Solomons's, and from there sent Philip a bunch of flowers and a line saying that on the following day she was coming to take tea with him. She had a guilty feeling that he might consider her friendly advances more seriously than she meant them, but it was her pleasure to be reckless: her feelings were running riotously, and the sensation was so new that she refused to be circumspect or to consider consequences. Who could tell, she asked herself with a quick, frightened gasp, but that, after all, it might be that she was learning to care? From Solomons's she bade the man drive to the shop in Cranbourne Street where she was accustomed to purchase the materials she used in painting, and Fate, which uses strange agents to work out its ends, so directed it that the cabman stopped a few doors below this shop, and opposite one where jewelry and other personal effects were bought and sold. At any other time,

or had she been in any other mood, what followed might not have occurred, but Fate, in the person of the cabman, arranged it so that the hour and the opportunity came together.

There were some old mezzotints in the window of the loan-shop, a string of coins and medals, a row of new French posters; and far down to the front a tray filled with gold and silver cigarette-cases and watches and rings. It occurred to Helen, who was still bent on making restitution for her neglect, that a cigarette-case would be more appropriate for a man than flowers, and more lasting. And she scanned the contents of the window with the eye of one who now saw in everything only something which might give Philip pleasure. The two objects of value in the tray upon which her eyes first fell were the gold seal-ring with which Philip had sealed his letters to her, and, lying next to it, his gold watch! There was something almost human in the way the ring and watch spoke to her from the past—in the way they appealed to her to rescue them from the surroundings to which they had been abandoned. She did not know what she meant to do with them nor how she could return them to Philip; but there was no question of doubt in her manner as she swept with a rush into the shop. There was no attempt, either, at bargaining in the way in which she pointed out to the

young woman behind the counter the particular ring and watch she wanted. They had not been left as collateral, the young woman said; they had been sold outright.

"Then anyone can buy them?" Helen asked, eagerly. "They are for sale to the public—to anyone?"

The young woman made note of the customer's eagerness, but with an unmoved countenance.

"Yes, miss, they are for sale. The ring is four pounds and the watch twenty-five."

"Twenty-nine pounds!" Helen gasped.

That was more money than she had in the world, but the fact did not distress her, for she had a true artistic disregard for ready money, and the absence of it had never disturbed her. But now it assumed a sudden and alarming value. She had ten pounds in her purse and ten pounds at her studio—these were just enough to pay for a quarter's rent and the rates, and there was a hat and cloak in Bond Street which she certainly must have. Her only assets consisted of the possibility that someone might soon order a miniature, and to her mind that was sufficient. Someone always had ordered a miniature, and there was no reasonable doubt but that someone would do it again. For a moment she questioned if it would not be sufficient if she bought the ring and allowed the

watch to remain. But she recognized that the ring meant more to her than the watch, while the latter, as an old heirloom which had been passed down to him from a great-grandfather, meant more to Philip. It was for Philip she was doing this, she reminded herself. She stood holding his possessions, one in each hand, and looking at the young woman blankly. She had no doubt in her mind that at least part of the money he had received for them had paid for the flowers he had sent to her in Scotland. The certainty of this left her no choice. She laid the ring and watch down and pulled the only ring she possessed from her own finger. It was a gift from Lady Gower. She had no doubt that it was of great value.

"Can you lend me some money on that?" she asked. It was the first time she had conducted a business transaction of this nature, and she felt as though she were engaging in a burglary.

"We don't lend money, miss," the girl said, "we buy outright. I can give you twenty-eight shillings for this," she added.

"Twenty-eight shillings!" Helen gasped. "Why, it is worth—oh, ever so much more than that!"

"That is all it is worth to us," the girl answered. She regarded the ring indifferently and laid it away from her on the counter. The action was final.

Helen's hands rose slowly to her breast, where

a pretty watch dangled from a bow-knot of crushed diamonds. It was her only possession, and she was very fond of it. It also was the gift of one of the several great ladies who had adopted her since her residence in London. Helen had painted a miniature of this particular great lady which had looked so beautiful that the pleasure which the original of the portrait derived from the thought that she still really looked as she did in the miniature was worth more to her than many diamonds.

But it was different with Helen, and no one could count what it cost her to tear away her one proud possession.

"What will you give me for this?" she asked, defiantly.

The girl's eyes showed greater interest. "I can give you twenty pounds for that," she said.

"Take it, please," Helen begged, as though she feared if she kept it a moment longer she might not be able to make the sacrifice.

"That will be enough now," she went on, taking out her ten-pound note. She put Lady Gower's ring back upon her finger and picked up Philip's ring and watch with the pleasure of one who has come into a great fortune. She turned back at the door.

"Oh," she stammered, "in case anyone should inquire, you are not to say who bought these."

"No, miss, certainly not," said the woman. Helen gave the direction to the cabman and, closing the doors of the hansom, sat looking down at the watch and the ring, as they lay in her lap. The thought that they had been his most valued possessions, which he had abandoned forever, and that they were now entirely hers, to do with as she liked, filled her with most intense delight and pleasure. She took up the heavy gold ring and placed it on the little finger of her left hand; it was much too large, and she removed it and balanced it for a moment doubtfully in the palm of her right hand. She was smiling, and her face was lit with shy and tender thoughts. She cast a quick glance to the left and right as though fearful that people passing in the street would observe her, and then slipped the ring over the fourth finger of her left hand. She gazed at it with a guilty smile, and then, covering it hastily with her other hand, leaned back, clasping it closely, and sat frowning far out before her with puzzled eyes.

To Carroll all roads led past Helen's studio, and during the summer, while she had been absent in Scotland, it was one of his sad pleasures to make a pilgrimage to her street and to pause opposite the house and look up at the empty windows of her rooms. It was during this daily exercise that he learned, through the arrival of her luggage, of

her return to London, and when day followed day without her having shown any desire to see him or to tell him of her return, he denounced himself most bitterly as a fatuous fool.

At the end of the week he sat down and considered his case quite calmly. For three years he had loved this girl, deeply and tenderly. He had been lover, brother, friend, and guardian. During that time, even though she had accepted him in every capacity except as that of the prospective husband, she had never given him any real affection, nor sympathy, nor help; all she had done for him had been done without her knowledge or intent. To know her, to love her, and to scheme to give her pleasure had been its own reward, and the only one. For the last few months he had been living like a crossing sweeper in order to be able to stay in London until she came back to it, and that he might still send her the gifts he had always laid on her altar. He had not seen her in three months. Three months that had been to him a blank, except for his work—which, like all else that he did, was inspired and carried on for her. Now at last she had returned and had shown that, even as a friend, he was of so little account in her thoughts, of so little consequence in her life, that after this long absence she had no desire to learn of his welfare or to see him

—she did not even give him the chance to see her. And so, placing these facts before him for the first time since he had loved her, he considered what was due to himself. "Was it good enough?" he asked. "Was it just that he should continue to wear out his soul and body for this girl who did not want what he had to give, who treated him less considerately than a man whom she met for the first time at dinner?" He felt he had reached the breaking-point; that the time had come when he must consider what he owed to himself. There could never be any other woman save Helen; but as it was not to be Helen, he could no longer, with self-respect, continue to proffer his love only to see it slighted and neglected. He was humble enough concerning himself, but of his love he was very proud. Other men could give her more in wealth or position, but no one could ever love her as he did. "He that hath more let him give," he had often quoted to her defiantly, as though he were challenging the world, and now he felt he must evolve a make-shift world of his own—a world in which she was not his only spring of acts; he must begin all over again and keep his love secret and sacred until she understood it and wanted it. And if she should never want it he would at least have saved it from many rebuffs and insults.

With this determination strong in him, the note Helen had left for him after her talk with Marion, and the flowers, and the note with them, saying she was coming to take tea on the morrow, failed to move him except to make him more bitter. He saw in them only a tardy recognition of her neglect —an effort to make up to him for thoughtlessness which, from her, hurt him worse than studied slight.

A new *régime* had begun, and he was determined to establish it firmly and to make it impossible for himself to retreat from it; and in the note in which he thanked Helen for the flowers and welcomed her to tea, he declared his ultimatum.

"You know how terribly I feel," he wrote; "I don't have to tell you that, but I cannot always go on dragging out my love and holding it up to excite your pity as beggars show their sores. I cannot always go on praying before your altar, cutting myself with knives and calling upon you to listen to me. You know that there is no one else but you, and that there never can be anyone but you, and that nothing is changed except that after this I am not going to urge and torment you. I shall wait as I have always waited—only now I shall wait in silence. You know just how little, in one way, I have to offer you, and you know

just how much I have in love to offer you. It is now for you to speak—some day, or never. But you will have to speak first. You will never hear a word of love from me again. Why should you? You know it is always waiting for you. But if you should ever want it, you must come to me, and take off your hat and put it on my table and say, 'Philip, I have come to stay.' Whether you can ever do that or not can make no difference in my love for you. I shall love you always, as no man has ever loved a woman in this world, but it is you who must speak first; for me, the rest is silence."

The following morning as Helen was leaving the house she found this letter lying on the hall-table, and ran back with it to her rooms. A week before she would have let it lie on the table and read it on her return. She was conscious that this was what she would have done, and it pleased her to find that what concerned Philip was now to her the thing of greatest interest. She was pleased with her own eagerness—her own happiness was a welcome sign, and she was proud and glad that she was learning to care.

She read the letter with an anxious pride and pleasure in each word that was entirely new. Philip's recriminations did not hurt her, they were the sign that he cared; nor did his determination

not to speak of his love to her hurt her, for she believed him when he said that he would always care. She read the letter twice, and then sat for some time considering the kind of letter Philip would have written had he known her secret—had he known that the ring he had abandoned was now upon her finger.

She rose and, crossing to a desk, placed the letter in a drawer, and then took it out again and reread the last page. When she had finished it she was smiling. For a moment she stood irresolute, and then, moving slowly toward the centre-table, cast a guilty look about her and, raising her hands, lifted her veil and half withdrew the pins that fastened her hat.

"Philip," she began, in a frightened whisper, "I have—I have come to——"

The sentence ended in a cry of protest, and she rushed across the room as though she were running from herself. She was blushing violently.

"Never!" she cried, as she pulled open the door; "I could never do it—never!"

The following afternoon, when Helen was to come to tea, Carroll decided that he would receive her with all the old friendliness, but that he must be careful to subdue all emotion.

He was really deeply hurt at her treatment, and had it not been that she came on her own invita-

tion he would not of his own accord have sought to see her. In consequence, he rather welcomed than otherwise the arrival of Marion Cavendish, who came a half-hour before Helen was expected, and who followed a hasty knock with a precipitate entrance.

"Sit down," she commanded, breathlessly, "and listen. I've been at rehearsal all day, or I'd have been here before you were awake." She seated herself nervously and nodded her head at Carroll in an excited and mysterious manner.

"What is it?" he asked. "Have you and Reggie——"

"Listen," Marion repeated. "Our fortunes are made; that is what's the matter—and I've made them. If you took half the interest in your work I do, you'd have made yours long ago. Last night," she began, impressively, "I went to a large supper at the Savoy, and I sat next to Charley Wimpole. He came in late, after everybody had finished, and I attacked him while he was eating his supper. He said he had been rehearsing 'Caste' after the performance; that they've put it on as a stop-gap on account of the failure of 'The Triflers,' and that he knew revivals were of no use; that he would give any sum for a good modern comedy. That was my cue, and I told him I knew of a better comedy than any he had pro-

duced at his theatre in five years, and that it was going begging. He laughed, and asked where was he to find this wonderful comedy, and I said, 'It's been in your safe for the last two months and you haven't read it.' He said, 'Indeed, how do you know that?' and I said, 'Because if you'd read it, it wouldn't be in your safe, but on your stage.' So he asked me what the play was about, and I told him the plot and what sort of a part his was, and some of his scenes, and he began to take notice. He forgot his supper, and very soon he grew so interested that he turned his chair round and kept eying my supper-card to find out who I was, and at last remembered seeing me in 'The New Boy'—and a rotten part it was, too—but he remembered it, and he told me to go on and tell him more about your play. So I recited it, bit by bit, and he laughed in all the right places and got very much excited, and said finally that he would read it the first thing this morning." Marion paused, breathlessly. "Oh, yes, and he wrote your address on his cuff," she added, with the air of delivering a complete and convincing climax.

Carroll stared at her and pulled excitedly on his pipe.

"Oh, Marion!" he gasped, "suppose he should? He won't, though," he added, but eying her eagerly and inviting contradiction.

"He will," she answered, stoutly, "if he reads it."

"The other managers read it," Carroll suggested, doubtfully.

"Yes, but what do they know?" Marion returned, loftily. "He knows. Charles Wimpole is the only intelligent actor-manager in London."

There was a sharp knock at the door, which Marion in her excitement had left ajar, and Prentiss threw it wide open with an impressive sweep, as though he were announcing royalty. "Mr. Charles Wimpole," he said.

The actor-manager stopped in the doorway bowing gracefully, his hat held before him and his hand on his stick as though it were resting on a foil. He had the face and carriage of a gallant of the days of Congreve, and he wore his modern frock-coat with as much distinction as if it were of silk and lace. He was evidently amused. "I couldn't help overhearing the last line," he said, smiling. "It gives me a good entrance."

Marion gazed at him blankly. "Oh," she gasped, "we—we—were just talking about you."

"If you hadn't mentioned my name," the actor said, "I should never have guessed it. And this is Mr. Carroll, I hope."

The great man was rather pleased with the situation. As he read it, it struck him as possessing

strong dramatic possibilities: Carroll was the struggling author on the verge of starvation; Marion, his sweetheart, flying to him gave him hope; and he was the good fairy arriving in the nick of time to set everything right and to make the young people happy and prosperous. He rather fancied himself in the part of the good fairy, and as he seated himself he bowed to them both in a manner which was charmingly inclusive and confidential.

"Miss Cavendish, I imagine, has already warned you that you might expect a visit from me," he said, tentatively. Carroll nodded. He was too much concerned to interrupt.

"Then I need only tell you," Wimpole continued, "that I got up at an absurd hour this morning to read your play; that I did read it; that I like it immensely—and that if we can come to terms I shall produce it. I shall produce it at once, within a fortnight or three weeks."

Carroll was staring at him intently and continued doing so after Wimpole had finished speaking. The actor felt he had somehow missed his point, or that Carroll could not have understood him, and repeated, "I say I shall put it in rehearsal at once."

Carroll rose abruptly, and pushed back his chair. "I should be very glad," he murmured, and strode over to the window, where he stood with his back

turned to his guests. Wimpole looked after him with a kindly smile and nodded his head appreciatively. He had produced even a greater effect than his lines seemed to warrant. When he spoke again, it was quite simply, and sincerely, and though he spoke for Carroll's benefit, he addressed himself to Marion.

"You were quite right last night," he said; "it is a most charming piece of work. I am really extremely grateful to you for bringing it to my notice." He rose, and going to Carroll, put his hand on his shoulder. "My boy," he said, "I congratulate you. I should like to be your age, and to have written that play. Come to my theatre to-morrow and we will talk terms. Talk it over first with your friends, so that I sha'n't rob you. Do you think you would prefer a lump sum now, and so be done with it altogether, or trust that the royalties may——"

"Royalties," prompted Marion, in an eager aside.

The men laughed. "Quite right," Wimpole assented, good-humoredly; "it's a poor sportsman who doesn't back his own horse. Well, then, until to-morrow."

"But," Carroll began, "one moment, please. I haven't thanked you."

"My dear boy," cried Wimpole, waving him

away with his stick, "it is I who have to thank you."

"And—and there is a condition," Carroll said, "which goes with the play. It is that Miss Cavendish is to have the part of *Nancy*."

Wimpole looked serious and considered for a moment.

"*Nancy*," he said, "the girl who interferes—a very good part. I have cast Miss Maddox for it in my mind, but, of course, if the author insists——"

Marion, with her elbows on the table, clasped her hands appealingly before her.

"Oh, Mr. Wimpole!" she cried, "you owe me that, at least."

Carroll leaned over and took both of Marion's hands in one of his.

"It's all right," he said; "the author insists."

Wimpole waved his stick again as though it were the magic wand of the good fairy.

"You shall have it," he said. "I recall your performance in 'The New Boy' with pleasure. I take the play, and Miss Cavendish shall be cast for *Nancy*. We shall begin rehearsals at once. I hope you are a quick study."

"I'm letter-perfect now," laughed Marion.

Wimpole turned at the door and nodded to them. They were both so young, so eager, and

so jubilant that he felt strangely old and out of it. "Good-by, then," he said.

"Good-by, sir," they both chorused. And Marion cried after him, "And thank you a thousand times."

He turned again and looked back at them, but in their rejoicing they had already forgotten him. "Bless you, my children," he said, smiling. As he was about to close the door a young girl came down the passage toward it, and as she was apparently going to Carroll's rooms, the actor left the door open behind him.

Neither Marion nor Carroll had noticed his final exit. They were both gazing at each other as though, could they find speech, they would ask if it were true.

"It's come at last, Marion," Philip said, with an uncertain voice.

"I could weep," cried Marion. "Philip," she exclaimed, "I would rather see that play succeed than any play ever written, and I would rather play that part in it than— Oh, Philip," she ended, "I'm so proud of you!" and rising, she threw her arms about his neck and sobbed on his shoulder.

Carroll raised one of her hands and kissed the tips of her fingers gently. "I owe it to you, Marion," he said—"all to you."

This was the tableau that was presented through

the open door to Miss Helen Cabot, hurrying on her errand of restitution and good-will, and with Philip's ring and watch clasped in her hand. They had not heard her, nor did they see her at the door, so she drew back quickly and ran along the passage and down the stairs into the street.

She did not need now to analyze her feelings. They were only too evident. For she could translate what she had just seen as meaning only one thing—that she had considered Philip's love so lightly that she had not felt it passing away from her until her neglect had killed it—until it was too late. And now that it was too late she felt that without it her life could not go on. She tried to assure herself that only the fact that she had lost it made it seem invaluable, but this thought did not comfort her—she was not deceived by it, she knew that at last she cared for him deeply and entirely. In her distress she blamed herself bitterly, but she also blamed Philip no less bitterly for having failed to wait for her. "He might have known that I must love him in time," she repeated to herself again and again. She was so unhappy that her letter congratulating Philip on his good fortune in having his comedy accepted seemed to him cold and unfeeling, and as his success meant for him only what it meant to her, he was hurt and grievously disappointed.

He accordingly turned the more readily to Marion, whose interests and enthusiasm at the rehearsals of the piece seemed in contrast most friendly and unselfish. He could not help but compare the attitude of the two girls at this time, when the failure or success of his best work was still undecided. He felt that as Helen took so little interest in his success he could not dare to trouble her with his anxieties concerning it, and she attributed his silence to his preoccupation and interest in Marion. So the two grew apart, each misunderstanding the other and each troubled in spirit at the other's indifference.

The first night of the play justified all that Marion and Wimpole had claimed for it, and was a great personal triumph for the new playwright. The audience was the typical first-night audience of the class which Charles Wimpole always commanded. It was brilliant, intelligent, and smart, and it came prepared to be pleased.

From one of the upper stage-boxes Helen and Lady Gower watched the successful progress of the play with an anxiety almost as keen as that of the author. To Helen it seemed as though the giving of these lines to the public—these lines which he had so often read to her, and altered to her liking—was a desecration. It seemed as though she were losing him indeed—as though

he now belonged to these strange people, all of whom were laughing and applauding his words, from the German Princess in the Royal box to the straight-backed Tommy in the pit. Instead of the painted scene before her, she saw the birch-trees by the river at home, where he had first read her the speech to which they were now listening so intensely—the speech in which the hero tells the girl he loves her. She remembered that at the time she had thought how wonderful it would be if some day someone made such a speech to her—not Philip, but a man she loved. And now? If Philip would only make that speech to her now!

He came out at last, with Wimpole leading him, and bowed across a glaring barrier of lights at a misty but vociferous audience that was shouting the generous English bravo! and standing up to applaud. He raised his eyes to the box where Helen sat, and saw her staring down at the tumult, with her hands clasped under her chin. Her face was colorless, but lit with the excitement of the moment; and he saw that she was crying.

Lady Gower, from behind her, was clapping her hands delightedly.

"But, my dear Helen," she remonstrated, breathlessly, "you never told me he was so good-looking."

Saw her staring down at the tumult.

"Yes," said Helen, rising abruptly, "he is—very good-looking."

She crossed the box to where her cloak was hanging, but instead of taking it down, buried her face in its folds.

"My dear child!" cried Lady Gower, in dismay. "What is it? The excitement has been too much for you."

"No, I am just happy," sobbed Helen. "I am just happy for him."

"We will go and tell him so, then," said Lady Gower. "I am sure he would like to hear it from you to-night."

Philip was standing in the centre of the stage, surrounded by many pretty ladies and elderly men. Wimpole was hovering over him as though he had claims upon him by the right of discovery.

But when Philip saw Helen, he pushed his way toward her eagerly and took her hand in both of his.

"I am so glad, Phil," she said. She felt it all so deeply that she was afraid to say more, but that meant so much to her that she was sure he would understand.

He had planned it very differently. For a year he had dreamed that, on the first night of his play, there would be a supper, and that he would rise and drink her health, and tell his friends and

the world that she was the woman he loved, and that she had agreed to marry him, and that at last he was able, through the success of his play, to make her his wife.

And now they met in a crowd to shake hands, and she went her way with one of her grand ladies, and he was left among a group of chattering strangers. The great English playwright took him by the hand and in the hearing of all praised him gracefully and kindly. It did not matter to Philip whether the older playwright believed what he said or not; he knew it was generously meant.

"I envy you this," the great man was saying. "Don't lose any of it, stay and listen to all they have to say. You will never live through the first night of your first play but once."

"Yes, I hear them," said Philip, nervously; "they are all too kind. But I don't hear the voice I have been listening for," he added, in a whisper. The older man pressed his hand again quickly. "My dear boy," he said, "I am sorry."

"Thank you," Philip answered.

Within a week he had forgotten the great man's fine words of praise, but the clasp of his hand he cherished always.

Helen met Marion as she was leaving the stage-door and stopped to congratulate her on her suc-

cess in the new part. Marion was radiant. To Helen she seemed obstreperously happy and jubilant.

"And, Marion," Helen began, bravely, "I also want to congratulate you on something else. You —you—neither of you have told me yet," she stammered, "but I am such an old friend of both that I will not be kept out of the secret." At these words Marion's air of triumphant gayety vanished; she regarded Helen's troubled eyes closely and kindly.

"What secret, Helen?" she asked.

"I came to the door of Philip's room the other day when you did not know I was there," Helen answered, "and I could not help seeing how matters were. And I do congratulate you both—and wish you—oh, such happiness!" Without a word Marion dragged her back down the passage to her dressing-room, and closed the door.

"Now tell me what you mean," she said.

"I am sorry if I discovered anything you didn't want known yet," said Helen, "but the door was open. Mr. Wimpole had just left you and had not shut it, and I could not help seeing."

Marion interrupted her with an eager exclamation of enlightenment.

"Oh, you were there, then," she cried. "And you?" she asked, eagerly—"you thought Phil

cared for me—that we are engaged, and it hurt you; you are sorry? Tell me," she demanded, "are you sorry?"

Helen drew back and stretched out her hand toward the door.

"How can you!" she exclaimed, indignantly. "You have no right."

Marion stood between her and the door.

"I have every right," she said, "to help my friends, and I want to help you and Philip. And, indeed, I do hope you *are* sorry. I hope you are miserable. And I'm glad you saw me kiss him. That was the first and the last time, and I did it because I was happy and glad for him; and because I love him, too, but not in the least in the way he loves you. No one ever loved anyone as he loves you. And it's time you found it out. And if I have helped to make you find it out, I'm glad, and I don't care how much I hurt you."

"Marion!" exclaimed Helen, "what does it mean? Do you mean that you are not engaged; that——"

"Certainly not," Marion answered. "I am going to marry Reggie. It is you that Philip loves, and I am very sorry for you that you don't love him."

Helen clasped Marion's hands in both of hers.

"But, Marion!" she cried, "I do, oh, I do!"

There was a thick yellow fog the next morning, and with it rain and a sticky, depressing dampness which crept through the window-panes, and which neither a fire nor blazing gas-jets could overcome.

Philip stood in front of the fireplace with the morning papers piled high on the centre-table and scattered over the room about him.

He had read them all, and he knew now what it was to wake up famous, but he could not taste it. Now that it had come it meant nothing, and that it was so complete a triumph only made it the harder. In his most optimistic dreams he had never imagined success so satisfying as the reality had proved to be; but in his dreams Helen had always held the chief part, and without her, success seemed only to mock him.

He wanted to lay it all before her, to say, "If you are pleased, I am happy. If you are satisfied, then I am content. It was done for you, and I am wholly yours, and all that I do is yours." And, as though in answer to his thoughts, there was an instant knock at the door, and Helen entered the room and stood smiling at him across the table.

Her eyes were lit with excitement, and spoke with many emotions, and her cheeks were brilliant

with color. He had never seen her look more beautiful.

"Why, Helen!" he exclaimed, "how good of you to come. Is there anything wrong? Is anything the matter?"

She tried to speak, but faltered, and smiled at him appealingly.

"What is it?" he asked in great concern.

Helen drew in her breath quickly, and at the same moment motioned him away—and he stepped back and stood watching her in much perplexity.

With her eyes fixed on his she raised her hands to her head, and her fingers fumbled with the knot of her veil. She pulled it loose, and then, with a sudden courage, lifted her hat proudly, as though it were a coronet, and placed it between them on his table.

"Philip," she stammered, with the tears in her voice and eyes, "if you will let me—I have come to stay."

The table was no longer between them. He caught her in his arms and kissed her face and her uncovered head again and again. From outside the rain beat drearily and the fog rolled through the street, but inside before the fire the two young people sat close together, asking eager questions or sitting in silence, staring at the flames with wondering, happy eyes.

The Lion and the Unicorn

The Lion and the Unicorn saw them only once again. It was a month later when they stopped in front of the shop in a four-wheeler, with their baggage mixed on top of it, and steamer-labels pasted over every trunk.

"And, oh, Prentiss!" Carroll called from the cab-window. "I came near forgetting. I promised to gild the Lion and the Unicorn if I won out in London. So have it done, please, and send the bill to me. For I've won out all right." And then he shut the door of the cab, and they drove away forever.

"Nice gal, that," growled the Lion. "I always liked her. I am glad they've settled it at last."

The Unicorn sighed sentimentally. "The other one's worth two of her," he said.

CINDERELLA

Cinderella

THE servants of the Hotel Salisbury, which is so called because it is situated on Broadway and conducted on the American plan by a man named Riggs, had agreed upon a date for their annual ball and volunteer concert, and had announced that it would eclipse every other annual ball in the history of the hotel. As the Hotel Salisbury had been only two years in existence, this was not an idle boast, and it had the effect of inducing many people to buy the tickets, which sold at a dollar apiece, and were good for "one gent and a lady," and entitled the bearer to a hat-check without extra charge.

In the flutter of preparation all ranks were temporarily levelled, and social barriers taken down with the mutual consent of those separated by them; the night-clerk so far unbent as to personally request the colored hall-boy Number Eight to play a banjo-solo at the concert, which was to fill in the pauses between the dances, and the chambermaids timidly consulted with the lady telegraph-operator and the lady in charge of the telephone, as to whether or not they intended to wear hats.

From "Cinderella and Other Stories." Copyright, 1898, by Charles Scribner's Sons.

And so every employee on every floor of the hotel was working individually for the success of the ball, from the engineers in charge of the electric-light plant in the cellar to the night-watchman on the ninth story, and the elevator-boys, who belonged to no floor in particular.

Miss Celestine Terrell, who was Mrs. Grahame West in private life, and young Grahame West, who played the part opposite to hers in the Gilbert and Sullivan Opera that was then in the third month of its New York run, were among the honored patrons of the Hotel Salisbury. Miss Terrell, in her utter inability to adjust the American coinage to English standards, and also in the kindness of her heart, had given too generous tips to all of the hotel waiters, and some of this money had passed into the gallery window of the Broadway Theatre, where the hotel waiters had heard her sing and seen her dance, and had failed to recognize her young husband in the Lord Chancellor's wig and black silk court-dress. So they knew that she was a celebrated personage, and they urged the *maître d'hôtel* to invite her to the ball, and then persuade her to take a part in their volunteer concert.

Paul, the head-waiter, or "Pierrot," as Grahame West called him, because it was shorter, as he explained, hovered over the two young English peo-

ple one night at supper, and served them lavishly with his own hands.

"Miss Terrell," said Paul, nervously—"I beg pardon, Madam, Mrs. Grahame West, I should say—I would like to make an invitation to you."

Celestine looked at her husband inquiringly, and bowed her head for Paul to continue.

"The employees of the Salisbury give the annual ball and concert on the sixteenth of December, and the committee have inquired and requested of me, on account of your kindness, to ask you would you be so polite as to sing a little song for us at the night of our ball?"

The head-waiter drew a long breath and straightened himself with a sense of relief at having done his part, whether the Grahame Wests did theirs or not.

As a rule, Miss Terrell did not sing in private, and had only broken this rule twice, when the inducements which led her to do so were forty pounds for each performance, and the fact that her beloved Princess of Wales was to be present. So she hesitated for an instant.

"Why, you are very good," she said, doubtfully. "Will there be any other people there—anyone not an employee, I mean?"

Paul misunderstood her and became a servant again.

"No, I am afraid there will be only the employees, Madam," he said.

"Oh, then, I should be very glad to come," murmured Celestine, sweetly. "But I never sing out of the theatre, so you mustn't mind if it is not good."

The head-waiter played a violent tattoo on the back of the chair in his delight, and balanced and bowed.

"Ah, we are very proud and pleased that we can induce Madam to make so great exceptions," he declared. "The committee will be most happy. We will send a carriage for Madam, and a bouquet for Madam also," he added, grandly, as one who was not to be denied the etiquette to which he plainly showed he was used.

"Will we come?" cried Van Bibber, incredulously, as he and Travers sat watching Grahame make up in his dressing-room. "I should say we would come. And you must all take supper with us first, and we will get Letty Chamberlain from the Gaiety Company and Lester to come, too, and make them each do a turn."

"And we can dance on the floor ourselves, can't we?" asked Grahame West, "as they do at home Christmas-eve in the servants' hall, when her ladyship dances in the same set with the butler, and the men waltz with the cook."

"Well, over here," said Van Bibber, "you'll have to be careful that you're properly presented to the cook first, or she'll appeal to the floor committee and have you thrown out."

"The interesting thing about that ball," said Travers, as he and Van Bibber walked home that night, "is the fact that those hotel people are getting a galaxy of stars to amuse them for nothing who wouldn't exhibit themselves at a Fifth Avenue dance for all the money in Wall Street. And the joke of it is going to be that the servants will vastly prefer the banjo-solo by hall-boy Number Eight."

Lyric Hall lies just this side of the Forty-second Street station along the line of the Sixth Avenue Elevated road, and you can look into its windows from the passing train. It was after one o'clock when the invited guests and their friends pushed open the storm-doors and were recognized by the anxious committee-men who were taking tickets at the top of the stairs. The committee-men fled in different directions, shouting for Mr. Paul, and Mr. Paul arrived beaming with delight and moisture, and presented a huge bouquet to Mrs. West, and welcomed her friends with hospitable warmth.

Mrs. West and Miss Chamberlain took off their hats and the men gave up their coats, not with-

out misgivings, to a sleepy young man who said pleasantly, as he dragged them into the coat-room window, "that they would be playing in great luck if they ever saw them again."

"I don't need to give you no checks," he explained; "just ask for the coats with real fur on 'em. Nobody else has any."

There was a balcony overhanging the floor, and the invited guests were escorted to it, and given seats where they could look down upon the dancers below, and the committee-men, in dangling badges with edges of silver fringe, stood behind their chairs and poured out champagne for them lavishly, and tore up the wine-check which the barkeeper brought with it, with princely hospitality.

The entrance of the invited guests created but small interest, and neither the beauty of the two English girls nor Lester's well-known features, which smiled from shop-windows and on every ash-barrel in the New York streets, aroused any particular comment. The employees were much more occupied with the Lancers then in progress and with the joyful actions of one of their number who was playing blind-man's-buff with himself, and swaying from set to set in search of his partner, who had given him up as hopeless and retired to the supper-room for crackers and beer.

Some of the ladies wore bonnets, and others

wore flowers in their hair, and a half-dozen were in gowns which were obviously intended for dancing and nothing else. But none of them were in *décolleté* gowns. A few wore gloves. They had copied the fashions of their richer sisters with the intuitive taste of the American girl of their class, and they waltzed quite as well as the ladies whose dresses they copied, and many of them were exceedingly pretty. The costumes of the gentlemen varied from the clothes they wore nightly when waiting on the table, to cutaway coats with white satin ties, and the regular blue and brass-buttoned uniform of the hotel.

"I am going to dance," said Van Bibber, "if Mr. Pierrot will present me to one of the ladies."

Paul introduced him to a lady in a white cheesecloth dress and black walking-shoes, with whom no one else would dance, and the musicians struck up "The Band Played On," and they launched out upon a slippery floor.

Van Bibber was conscious that his friends were applauding him in dumb show from the balcony, and when his partner asked who they were, he repudiated them altogether, and said he could not imagine, but that he guessed from their bad manners they were professional entertainers hired for the evening.

The music stopped abruptly, and as he saw Mrs.

West leaving the balcony, he knew that his turn had come, and as she passed him he applauded her vociferously, and as no one else applauded even slightly, she grew very red.

Her friends knew that they formed the audience which she dreaded, and she knew that they were rejoicing in her embarrassment, which the head of the downstairs department, as Mr. Paul described him, increased to an hysterical point by introducing her as "Miss Ellen Terry, the great English actress, who would now oblige with a song."

The man had seen the name of the wonderful English actress on the bill-boards in front of Abbey's Theatre, and he had been told that Miss Terrell was English, and confused the two names. As he passed Van Bibber he drew his waistcoat into shape with a proud shrug of his shoulders, and said, anxiously, "I gave your friend a good introduction, anyway, didn't I?"

"You did, indeed," Van Bibber answered. "You couldn't have surprised her more; and it made a great hit with me, too."

No one in the room listened to the singing. The gentlemen had crossed their legs comfortably and were expressing their regret to their partners that so much time was wasted in sandwiching songs between the waltzes, and the ladies were engaged

in criticising Celestine's hair, which she wore in a bun. They thought that it might be English, but it certainly was not their idea of good style.

Celestine was conscious of the fact that her husband and Lester were hanging far over the balcony, holding their hands to their eyes as though they were opera-glasses, and exclaiming with admiration and delight; and when she had finished the first verse, they pretended to think that the song was over, and shouted, "Bravo, encore!" and applauded frantically, and then, apparently overcome with confusion at their mistake, sank back entirely from sight.

"I think Miss Terrell's an elegant singer," Van Bibber's partner said to him. "I seen her at the hotel frequently. She has such a pleasant way with her, quite lady-like. She's the only actress I ever saw that has retained her timidity. She acts as though she were shy, don't she?"

Van Bibber, who had spent a month on the Thames the summer before with the Grahame Wests, surveyed Celestine with sudden interest, as though he had never seen her before until that moment, and agreed that she did look shy, one might almost say frightened to death. Mrs. West rushed through the second verse of the song, bowed breathlessly, and ran down the steps of the stage and back to the refuge of the balcony, while the

audience applauded with perfunctory politeness and called clamorously to the musicians to "Let her go!"

"And that is the song," commented Van Bibber, "that gets six encores and three calls every night on Broadway!"

Grahame West affected to be greatly chagrined at his wife's failure to charm the chambermaids and porters with her little love-song, and when his turn came, he left them with alacrity, assuring them that they would now see the difference, as he would sing a song better suited to their level.

But the song that had charmed London and captured the unprotected coast-town of New York, fell on heedless ears; and, except the evil ones in the gallery, no one laughed and no one listened, and Lester declared with tears in his eyes that he would not go through such an ordeal for the receipts of an Actors' Fund Benefit.

Van Bibber's partner caught him laughing at Grahame West's vain efforts to amuse, and said, tolerantly, that Mr. West was certainly comical, but that she had a lady friend with her who could recite pieces which were that comic that you'd die of laughing. She presented her friend to Van Bibber, and he said he hoped that they were going to hear her recite, as laughing must be a pleasant death. But the young lady explained that she had

had the misfortune to lose her only brother that summer, and that she had given up everything but dancing in consequence. She said she did not think it looked right to see a girl in mourning recite comic monologues.

Van Bibber struggled to be sympathetic, and asked what her brother had died of. She told him that "he died of a Thursday," and the conversation came to an embarrassing pause.

Van Bibber's partner had another friend in a gray corduroy waistcoat and tan shoes, who was of Hebraic appearance. He also wore several very fine rings, and officiated with what was certainly religious tolerance at the M. E. Bethel Church. She said he was an elegant or—gan—ist, putting the emphasis on the second syllable, which made Van Bibber think that she was speaking of some religious body to which he belonged. But the organist made his profession clear by explaining that the committee had just invited him to oblige the company with a solo on the piano, but that he had been hitting the champagne so hard that he doubted if he could tell the keys from the pedals, and he added that if they'd excuse him he would go to sleep, which he immediately did with his head on the shoulder of the lady recitationist, who tactfully tried not to notice that he was there.

They were all waltzing again, and as Van Bibber guided his partner for a second time around the room, he noticed a particularly handsome girl in a walking-dress, who was doing some sort of a fancy step with a solemn, grave-faced young man in the hotel livery. They seemed by their manner to know each other very well, and they had apparently practised the step that they were doing often before.

The girl was much taller than the man, and was superior to him in every way. Her movements were freer and less conscious, and she carried her head and shoulders as though she had never bent them above a broom. Her complexion was soft and her hair of the finest, deepest auburn. Among all the girls upon the floor she was the most remarkable, even if her dancing had not immediately distinguished her.

The step which she and her partner were exhibiting was one that probably had been taught her by a professor of dancing at some East Side academy, at the rate of fifty cents per hour, and which she no doubt believed was the latest step danced in the gilded halls of the Few Hundred. In this waltz the two dancers held each other's hands, and the man swung his partner behind him, and then would turn and take up the step with her where they had dropped it; or they swung

around and around each other several times, as people do in fancy skating, and sometimes he spun her so quickly one way that the skirt of her walking-dress was wound as tightly around her legs and ankles as a cord around a top, and then as he swung her in the opposite direction, it unwound again, and wrapped about her from the other side. They varied this when it pleased them with balancings and steps and posturings that were not sufficiently extravagant to bring any comment from the other dancers, but which were so full of grace and feeling for time and rhythm, that Van Bibber continually reversed his partner so that he might not for an instant lose sight of the girl with auburn hair.

"She is a very remarkable dancer," he said at last, apologetically. "Do you know who she is?"

His partner had observed his interest with increasing disapproval, and she smiled triumphantly now at the chance that his question gave her.

"She is the seventh-floor chambermaid," she said. "I," she added in a tone which marked the social superiority, "am a checker and marker."

"Really?" said Van Bibber, with a polite accent of proper awe.

He decided that he must see more of this Cinderella of the Hotel Salisbury; and dropping his partner by the side of the lady recitationist, he

bowed his thanks and hurried to the gallery for a better view.

When he reached it he found his professional friends hanging over the railing, watching every movement which the girl made with an intense and unaffected interest.

"Have you noticed that girl with red hair?" he asked, as he pulled up a chair beside them.

But they only nodded and kept their eyes fastened on the opening in the crowd through which she had disappeared.

"There she is!" Grahame West cried, excitedly, as the girl swept out from the mass of dancers into the clear space. "Now you can see what I mean, Celestine," he said. "Where he turns her like that. We could do it in the shadow-dance in the second act. It's very pretty. She lets go his right hand and then he swings her and balances backward until she takes up the step again, when she faces him. It is very simple and very effective. Isn't it, George?"

Lester nodded and said, "Yes, very. She's a born dancer. You can teach people steps, but you can't teach them to be graceful."

"She reminds me of Sylvia Grey," said Miss Chamberlain. "There's nothing violent about it, or faked, is there? It's just the poetry of motion, without any tricks."

Lester, who was a trick-dancer himself, and Grahame West, who was one of the best eccentric dancers in England, assented to this cheerfully.

Van Bibber listened to the comments of the authorities and smiled grimly. The contrast which their lives presented to that of the young girl whom they praised so highly, struck him as being most interesting. Here were two men who had made comic dances a profound and serious study, and the two women who had lifted dancing to the plane of a fine art, all envying and complimenting a girl who was doing for her own pleasure that which was to them hard work and a livelihood. But while they were going back the next day to be applauded and petted and praised by a friendly public, she was to fly like Cinderella, to take up her sweeping and dusting and the making of beds, and the answering of peremptory summonses from electric buttons.

"A good teacher could make her worth one hundred dollars a week in six lessons," said Lester, dispassionately. "I'd be willing to make her an offer myself, if I hadn't too many dancers in the piece already."

"A hundred dollars—that's twenty pounds," said Mrs. Grahame West. "You do pay such prices over here! But I quite agree that she is

very graceful; and she is so unconscious, too, isn't she?"

The interest in Cinderella ceased when the waltzing stopped, and the attention of those in the gallery was riveted with equal intensity upon Miss Chamberlain and Travers, who had faced each other in a quadrille, Miss Chamberlain having accepted the assistant barkeeper for a partner, while Travers contented himself with a tall, elderly female, who in business hours had entire charge of the linen department. The barkeeper was a melancholy man with a dyed mustache, and when he asked the English dancer from what hotel she came, and she, thinking he meant at what hotel was she stopping, told him, he said that that was a slow place, and that if she would let him know when she had her night off, he would be pleased to meet her at the Twenty-third Street station of the Sixth Avenue road on the uptown side, and would take her to the theatre, for which, he explained, he was able to obtain tickets for nothing, as so many men gave him their return checks for drinks.

Miss Chamberlain told him in return that she just doted on the theatre, and promised to meet him the very next evening. She sent him anonymously instead two seats in the front row for her performance. She had much delight the next night

in watching his countenance when, after arriving somewhat late and cross, he recognized the radiant beauty on the stage as the young person with whom he had condescended to dance.

When the quadrille was over she introduced him to Travers, and Travers told him he mixed drinks at the Knickerbocker Club, and that his greatest work was a Van Bibber cocktail. And when the barkeeper asked for the recipe and promised to "push it along," Travers told him he never made it twice the same, as it depended entirely on his mood.

Mrs. Grahame West and Lester were scandalized at the conduct of these two young people and ordered the party home, and as the dance was growing somewhat noisy and the gentlemen were smoking as they danced, the invited guests made their bows to Mr. Paul and went out into cold, silent streets, followed by the thanks and compliments of seven bare-headed and swaying committee-men.

The next week Lester went on the road with his comic opera company; the Grahame Wests sailed to England; Letty Chamberlain and the other "Gee Gees," as Travers called the Gaiety Girls, departed for Chicago, and Travers and Van Bibber were left alone.

The annual ball was a month in the past when Van Bibber found Travers at breakfast at their club, and dropped into a chair beside him with a sigh of weariness and indecision.

"What's the trouble? Have some breakfast?" said Travers, cheerfully.

"Thank you, no," said Van Bibber, gazing at his friend doubtfully; "I want to ask you what you think of this. Do you remember that girl at that servants' ball?"

"Which girl?—Tall girl with red hair—did fancy dance? Yes—why?"

"Well, I've been thinking about her lately," said Van Bibber, "and what they said of her dancing. It seems to me that if it's as good as they thought it was, the girl ought to be told of it and encouraged. They evidently meant what they said. It wasn't as though they were talking about her to her relatives and had to say something pleasant. Lester thought she could make a hundred dollars a week if she had had six lessons. Well, six lessons wouldn't cost much, not more than ten dollars at the most, and a hundred a week for an original outlay of ten is a good investment."

Travers nodded his head in assent, and whacked an egg viciously with his spoon. "What's your scheme?" he said. "Is your idea to help the lady for her own sake—sort of a philanthropic snap—

or as a speculation? We might make it pay as a speculation. You see nobody knows about her except you and me. We might form her into a sort of stock company and teach her to dance, and secure her engagements and then take our commission out of her salary. Is that what you were thinking of doing?"

"No, that was not my idea," said Van Bibber, smiling. "I hadn't any plan. I just thought I'd go down to that hotel and tell her that in the opinion of the four people best qualified to know what good dancing is, she is a good dancer, and then leave the rest to her. She must have some friends or relations who would help her to make a start. If it's true that she can make a hit as a dancer, it seems a pity that she shouldn't know it, doesn't it? If she succeeded, she'd make a pot of money, and if she failed, she'd be just where she is now."

Travers considered this subject deeply, with knit brows.

"That's so," he said. "I'll tell you what let's do. Let's go see some of the managers of those continuous performance places, and tell them we have a dark horse that the Grahame Wests and Letty Chamberlain herself and George Lester think is the coming dancer of the age, and ask them to give her a chance. And we'll make some

sort of a contract with them. We ought to fix it so that she is to get bigger money the longer they keep her in the bill, have her salary on a rising scale. Come on," he exclaimed, warming to the idea. "Let's go now. What have you got to do?"

"I've got nothing better to do than just that," Van Bibber declared, briskly.

The managers whom they interviewed were interested but non-committal. They agreed that the girl must be a remarkable dancer indeed to warrant such praise from such authorities, but they wanted to see her and judge for themselves, and they asked to be given her address, which the impresarios refused to disclose. But they secured from the managers the names of several men who taught fancy dancing, and who prepared aspirants for the vaudeville stage, and having obtained from them their prices and their opinion as to how long a time would be required to give the finishing touches to a dancer already accomplished in the art, they directed their steps to the Hotel Salisbury.

" 'From the Seventh Story to the Stage,' " said Travers. "She will make very good newspaper paragraphs, won't she? 'The New American Dancer, indorsed by Celestine Terrell, Letty Chamberlain, and Cortlandt Van Bibber.' And

we could get her outside engagements to dance at studios and evening parties after her regular performance, couldn't we?" he continued. "She ought to ask from fifty to a hundred dollars a night. With her regular salary that would average about three hundred and fifty a week. She is probably making three dollars a week now, and eats in the servants' hall."

"And then we will send her abroad," interrupted Van Bibber, taking up the tale, "and she will do the music-halls in London. If she plays three halls a night, say one on the Surrey Side, and Islington, and a smart West End hall like the Empire or the Alhambra, at fifteen guineas a turn, that would bring her in five hundred and twenty-five dollars a week. And then she would go to the Folies Bergère in Paris, and finally to St. Petersburg and Milan, and then come back to dance in the Grand Opera season, under Gus Harris, with a great international reputation, and hung with flowers and medals and diamond sunbursts and things."

"Rather," said Travers, shaking his head enthusiastically. "And after that we must invent a new dance for her, with colored lights and mechanical snaps and things, and have it patented; and finally she will get her picture on soda-cracker boxes and cigarette advertisements, and have a

race-horse named after her, and give testimonials for nerve-tonics and soap. Does fame reach farther than that?"

"I think not," said Van Bibber, "unless they give her name to a new make of bicycle. We must give her a new name, anyway, and rechristen her, whatever her name may be. We'll call her Cinderella—La Cinderella. That sounds fine, doesn't it, even if it is rather long for the very largest type."

"It isn't much longer than Carmencita," suggested the other. "And people who have the proud knowledge of knowing her like you and me will call her 'Cinders' for short. And when we read of her dancing before the Czar of All the Russias, and leading the ballet at the Grand Opera House in Paris, we'll say, 'that is our handiwork,' and we will feel that we have not lived in vain."

"Seventh floor, please," said Van Bibber to the elevator-boy.

The elevator-boy was a young man of serious demeanor, with a smooth-shaven face and a square, determined jaw. There was something about him which seemed familiar, but Van Bibber could not determine just what it was. The elevator stopped to allow some people to leave it at the second

floor, and as the young man shoved the door to again, Van Bibber asked him if he happened to know of a chambermaid with red hair—a tall girl on the seventh floor, a girl who danced very well.

The wire rope of the elevator slipped less rapidly through the hands of the young man who controlled it, and he turned and fixed his eyes with sudden interest on Van Bibber's face, and scrutinized him and his companion with serious consideration.

"Yes, I know her—I know who you mean, anyway," he said. "Why?"

"Why?" echoed Van Bibber, raising his eyes. "We wish to see her on a matter of business. Can you tell me her name?"

The elevator was running so slowly now that its movement upward was barely perceptible.

"Her name's Annie—Annie Crehan. Excuse me," said the young man, doubtfully, "ain't you the young fellows who came to our ball with that English lady, the one that sung?"

"Yes," Van Bibber assented, pleasantly. "We were there. That's where I've seen you before. You were there, too, weren't you?"

"Me and Annie was dancing together most all the evening. I seen all youse watching her."

"Of course," exclaimed Van Bibber, "I re-

member you now. Oh, then you must know her quite well. Maybe you can help us. We want to put her on the stage."

The elevator came to a stop with an abrupt jerk, and the young man shoved his hands behind him, and leaned back against one of the mirrors in its side.

"On the stage," he repeated. "Why?"

Van Bibber smiled and shrugged his shoulders in some embarrassment at this peremptory challenge. But there was nothing in the young man's tone or manner that could give offence. He seemed much in earnest, and spoke as though they must understand that he had some right to question.

"Why? Because of her dancing. She is a very remarkable dancer. All of those actors with us that night said so. You must know that yourself better than anyone else, since you can dance with her. She could make quite a fortune as a dancer, and we have persuaded several managers to promise to give her a trial. And if she needs money to pay for lessons, or to buy the proper dresses and slippers and things, we are willing to give it to her, or to lend it to her, if she would like that better."

"Why?" repeated the young man, immovably. His manner was not encouraging.

"Why—what?" interrupted Travers, with growing impatience.

"Why are you willing to give her money? You don't know her."

Van Bibber looked at Travers, and Travers smiled in some annoyance. The electric bell rang violently from different floors, but the young man did not heed it. He had halted the elevator between two landings, and he now seated himself on the velvet cushions and crossed one leg over the other, as though for a protracted debate. Travers gazed about him in humorous apprehension, as though alarmed at the position in which he found himself, hung as it were between the earth and sky.

"I swear I am an unarmed man," he said, in a whisper.

"Our intentions are well meant, I assure you," said Van Bibber, with an amused smile. "The girl is working ten hours a day for very little money, isn't she? You know she is, when she could make a great deal of money by working half as hard. We have some influence with theatrical people, and we meant merely to put her in the way of bettering her position, and to give her the chance to do something which she can do better than many others, while almost anyone, I take it, can sweep and make beds. If she were properly

managed, she could become a great dancer, and delight thousands of people—add to the gayety of nations, as it were. She's hardly doing that now, is she? Have you any objections to that? What right have you to make objections, anyway?"

The young man regarded the two young gentlemen before him with a dogged countenance, but there was now in his eyes a look of helplessness and of great disquietude.

"We're engaged to be married, Annie and me," he said. "That's it."

"Oh," exclaimed Van Bibber, "I beg your pardon. That's different. Well, in that case, you can help us very much, if you wish. We leave it entirely with you!"

"I don't want that you should leave it with me," said the young man, harshly. "I don't want to have nothing to do with it. Annie can speak for herself. I knew it was coming to this," he said, leaning forward and clasping his hands together, "or something like this. I've never felt dead sure of Annie, never once. I always knew something would happen."

"Why, nothing has happened," said Van Bibber, soothingly. "You would both benefit by it. We would be as willing to help two as one. You would both be better off."

The young man raised his head and stared at Van Bibber reprovingly.

"You know better than that," he said. "You know what I'd look like. Of course she could make money as a dancer—I've known that for some time—but she hasn't thought of it yet, and she'd never have thought of it herself. But the question isn't me or what I want. It's Annie. Is she going to be happier or not, that's the question. And I'm telling you that she couldn't be any happier than she is now. I know that, too. We're just as contented as two folks ever was. We've been saving for three months, and buying furniture from the instalment people, and next month we were going to move into a flat on Seventh Avenue, quite handy to the hotel. If she goes onto the stage could she be any happier? And if you're honest in saying you're thinking of the two of us —I ask you where would I come in? I'll be pulling this wire rope and she'll be all over the country, and her friends won't be my friends and her ways won't be my ways. She'll get out of reach of me in a week, and I won't be in it. I'm not the sort to go loafing round while my wife supports me, carrying her satchel for her. And there's nothing I can do but just this. She'd come back here some day and live in the front floor suite, and I'd pull her up and down in this elevator. That's

what will happen. Here's what you two gentlemen are doing." The young man leaned forward eagerly. "You're offering a change to two people that are as well off now as they ever hope to be, and they're contented. We don't know nothin' better. Now, are you dead sure that you're giving us something better than what we've got? You can't make me any happier than I am, and as far as Annie knows, up to now, she couldn't be better fixed, and no one could care for her more.

"My God! gentlemen," he cried, desperately, "think! She's all I've got. There's lots of dancers, but she's not a dancer to me, she's just Annie. I don't want her to delight the gayety of nations. I want her for myself. Maybe I'm selfish, but I can't help that. She's mine, and you're trying to take her away from me. Suppose she was your girl, and someone was sneaking her away from you. You'd try to stop it, wouldn't you, if she was all you had?" He stopped breathlessly and stared alternately from one to the other of the young men before him. Their countenances showed an expression of well-bred concern.

"It's for you to judge," he went on, helplessly; "if you want to take the responsibility, well and good, that's for you to say. I'm not stopping you, but she's all I've got."

The young man stopped, and there was a pause

while he eyed them eagerly. The elevator-bell rang out again with vicious indignation.

Travers struck at the toe of his boot with his stick and straightened his shoulders.

"I think you're extremely selfish, if you ask me," he said.

The young man stood up quickly and took his elevator-rope in both hands. "All right," he said, quietly, "that settles it. I'll take you up to Annie now, and you can arrange it with her. I'm not standing in her way."

"Hold on," protested Van Bibber and Travers in a breath. "Don't be in such a hurry," growled Travers.

The young man stood immovable, with his hands on the wire and looking down on them, his face full of doubt and distress.

"I don't want to stand in Annie's way," he repeated, as though to himself. "I'll do whatever you say. I'll take you to the seventh floor or I'll drop you to the street. It's up to you, gentlemen," he added, helplessly, and turning his back to them threw his arm against the wall of the elevator and buried his face upon it.

There was an embarrassing pause, during which Van Bibber scowled at himself in the mirror opposite as though to ask it what a man who looked like that should do under such trying circumstances.

He turned at last and stared at Travers. " 'Where ignorance is bliss, it's folly to be wise,' " he whispered, keeping his face toward his friend. "What do you say? Personally I don't see myself in the part of Providence. It's the case of the poor man and his one ewe lamb, isn't it?"

"We don't want his ewe lamb, do we?" growled Travers. "It's a case of the dog in a manger, I say. I thought we were going to be fairy godfathers to 'La Cinderella.' "

"The lady seems to be supplied with a most determined godfather as it is," returned Van Bibber.

The elevator-boy raised his face and stared at them with haggard eyes.

"Well?" he begged.

Van Bibber smiled upon him reassuringly, with a look partly of respect and partly of pity.

"You can drop us to the street," he said.

MISS DELAMAR'S UNDERSTUDY

Miss Delamar's Understudy

A YOUNG man runs two chances of marrying the wrong woman. He marries her because she is beautiful, and because he persuades himself that every other lovable attribute must be associated with such beauty, or because she is in love with him. If this latter is the case, she gives certain values to what he thinks and to what he says which no other woman gives, and so he observes to himself, "This is the woman who best understands *me*."

You can reverse this and say that young women run the same risks, but as men are seldom beautiful, the first danger is eliminated. Women still marry men, however, because they are loved by them, and in time the woman grows to depend upon this love and to need it, and is not content without it, and so she consents to marry the man for no other reason than because he cares for her. For if a dog, even, runs up to you wagging his tail and acting as though he were glad to see you, you pat him on the head and say, "What a nice

From "Cinderella and Other Stories." Copyright, 1898, by Charles Scribner's Sons.

dog." You like him because he likes you, and not because he belongs to a fine breed of animal and could take blue ribbons at bench shows.

This is the story of a young man who was in love with a beautiful woman, and who allowed her beauty to compensate him for many other things. When she failed to understand what he said to her he smiled and looked at her and forgave her at once, and when she began to grow uninteresting, he would take up his hat and go away, and so he never knew how very uninteresting she might possibly be if she were given time enough in which to demonstrate the fact. He never considered that, were he married to her, he could not take up his hat and go away when she became uninteresting, and that her remarks, which were not brilliant, could not be smiled away either. They would rise up and greet him every morning, and would be the last thing he would hear at night.

Miss Delamar's beauty was so conspicuous that to pretend not to notice it was more foolish than well-bred. You got along more easily and simply by accepting it at once, and referring to it, and enjoying its effect upon other people. To go out of one's way to talk of other things when everyone, even Miss Delamar herself, knew what must be uppermost in your mind, always seemed as absurd as to strain a point in politeness, and to

pretend not to notice that a guest had upset his claret, or any other embarrassing fact. For Miss Delamar's beauty was so distinctly embarrassing that this was the only way to meet it—to smile and pass it over and to try, if possible, to get on to something else. It was on account of this extraordinary quality in her appearance that everyone considered her beauty as something which transcended her private ownership, and which belonged by right to the polite world at large, to anyone who could appreciate it properly, just as though it were a sunset or a great work of art or of nature. And so, when she gave away her photographs no one thought it meant anything more serious than a recognition on her part of the fact that it would have been unkind and selfish in her not to have shared the enjoyment of so much loveliness with others.

Consequently, when she sent one of her largest and most aggravatingly beautiful photographs to young Stuart, it was no sign that she cared especially for him.

How much young Stuart cared for Miss Delamar, however, was an open question, and a condition yet to be discovered. That he cared for someone, and cared so much that his imagination had begun to picture the awful joys and responsibilities of marriage, was only too well known to himself,

and was a state of mind already suspected by his friends.

Stuart was a member of the New York bar, and the distinguished law firm to which he belonged was very proud of its junior member, and treated him with indulgence and affection, which was not unmixed with amusement. For Stuart's legal knowledge had been gathered in many odd corners of the globe, and was various and peculiar. It had been his pleasure to study the laws by which men ruled other men in every condition of life, and under every sun. The regulations of a new mining camp were fraught with as great interest to him as the accumulated precedents of the English Constitution, and he had investigated the rulings of the mixed courts of Egypt and of the government of the little Dutch republic near the Cape with as keen an effort to comprehend, as he had shown in studying the laws of the American colonies and of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

But he was not always serious, and it sometimes happened that after he had arrived at some queer little island where the native prince and the English governor sat in judgment together, his interest in the intricacies of their laws would give way to the more absorbing occupation of chasing wild boar or shooting at tigers from the top of an elephant. And so he was not only regarded as an

authority on many forms of government and of law, into which no one else had ever taken the trouble to look, but his books on big game were eagerly read and his articles in the magazines were earnestly discussed, whether they told of the divorce laws of Dakota, and the legal rights of widows in Cambodia, or the habits of the Mexican lion.

Stuart loved his work better than he knew, but how well he loved Miss Delamar neither he nor his friends could tell. She was the most beautiful and lovely creature that he had ever seen, and of that only was he certain.

Stuart was sitting in the club one day when the conversation turned to matrimony. He was among his own particular friends, the men before whom he could speak seriously or foolishly without fear of being misunderstood or of having what he said retold and spoiled in the telling. There was Seldon, the actor, and Rives, who painted pictures, and young Sloane, who travelled for pleasure and adventure, and Weimer, who stayed at home and wrote for the reviews. They were all bachelors, and very good friends, and jealously guarded their little circle from the intrusion of either men or women.

"Of course the chief objection to marriage," Stuart said—it was the very day in which the

picture had been sent to his rooms—"is the old one that you can't tell anything about it until you are committed to it forever. It is a very silly thing to discuss even, because there is no way of bringing it about, but there really should be some sort of a preliminary trial. As the man says in the play, 'You wouldn't buy a watch without testing it first.' You don't buy a hat even without putting it on, and finding out whether it is becoming or not, or whether your peculiar style of ugliness can stand it. And yet men go gayly off and get married, and make the most awful promises, and alter their whole order of life, and risk the happiness of some lovely creature on trust, as it were, knowing absolutely nothing of the new conditions and responsibilities of the life before them. Even a river-pilot has to serve an apprenticeship before he gets a license, and yet we are allowed to take just as great risks, and only because we *want* to take them. It's awful, and it's all wrong."

"Well, I don't see what one is going to do about it," commented young Sloane, lightly, "except to get divorced. That road is always open."

Sloane was starting the next morning for the Somali Country, in Abyssinia, to shoot rhinoceros, and his interest in matrimony was in consequence somewhat slight.

"It isn't the fear of the responsibilities that

keeps Stuart, nor any one of us back," said Weimer, contemptuously. "It's because we're selfish. That's the whole truth of the matter. We love our work, or our pleasure, or to knock about the world, better than we do any particular woman. When one of us comes to love the woman best, his conscience won't trouble him long about the responsibilities of marrying her."

"Not at all," said Stuart. "I am quite sincere; I maintain that there should be a preliminary stage. Of course there can't be, and it's absurd to think of it, but it would save a lot of unhappiness."

"Well," said Seldon, dryly, "when you've invented a way to prevent marriage from being a lottery, let me know, will you?" He stood up and smiled nervously. "Any of you coming to see us to-night?" he asked.

"That's so," exclaimed Weimer; "I forgot. It's the first night of 'A Fool and His Money,' isn't it? Of course we're coming."

"I told them to put a box away for you in case you wanted it," Seldon continued. "Don't expect much. It's a silly piece, and I've a silly part, and I'm very bad in it. You must come around to supper, and tell me where I'm bad in it, and we will talk it over. You're coming, Stuart?"

"My dear old man," said Stuart, reproachfully,

"of course I am. I've had my seats for the last three weeks. Do you suppose I could miss hearing you mispronounce all the Hindostanee I've taught you?"

"Well, good-night then," said the actor, waving his hand to his friends as he moved away. "'We, who are about to die, salute you!'"

"Good luck to you," said Sloane, holding up his glass. "To the Fool and His Money," he laughed. He turned to the table again, and sounded the bell for the waiter. "Now let's send him a telegram and wish him success, and all sign it," he said, "and don't you fellows tell him that I wasn't in front to-night. I've got to go to a dinner the Travellers' Club are giving me." There was a protesting chorus of remonstrance. "Oh, I don't like it any better than you do," said Sloane, "but I'll get away early and join you before the play's over. No one in the Travellers' Club, you see, has ever travelled farther from New York than London or the Riviera, and so when a member starts for Abyssinia they give him a dinner, and he has to take himself very seriously indeed, and cry with Seldon, 'I, who am about to die, salute you!' If that man there was any use," he added, interrupting himself and pointing with his glass at Stuart, "he'd pack up his things to-night and come with me."

"Oh, don't urge him," remonstrated Weimer, who had travelled all over the world in imagination, with the aid of globes and maps, but never had got any farther from home than Montreal. "We can't spare Stuart. He has to stop here and invent a preliminary marriage state, so that if he finds he doesn't like a girl, he can leave her before it is too late."

"You sail at seven, I believe, and from Hoboken, don't you?" asked Stuart, undisturbed. "If you'll start at eleven from the New York side, I think I'll go with you, but I hate getting up early; and then you see—I know what dangers lurk in Abyssinia, but who could tell what might not happen to him in Hoboken?"

When Stuart returned to his room, he found a large package set upright in an arm-chair and enveloped by many wrappings; but the handwriting on the outside told him at once from whom it came and what it might be, and he pounced upon it eagerly and tore it from its covers. The photograph was a very large one, and the likeness to the original so admirable that the face seemed to smile and radiate with all the loveliness and beauty of Miss Delamar herself. Stuart beamed upon it with genuine surprise and pleasure, and exclaimed delightedly to himself. There was a living quality about the picture which made him

almost speak to it, and thank Miss Delamar through it for the pleasure she had given him and the honor she had bestowed. He was proud, flattered, and triumphant, and while he walked about the room deciding where he would place it, and holding the picture respectfully before him, he smiled upon it with grateful satisfaction.

He decided against his dressing-table as being too intimate a place for it, and so carried the picture on from his bedroom to the dining-room beyond, where he set it among his silver on the sideboard. But so little of his time was spent in this room that he concluded he would derive but little pleasure from it there, and so bore it back again into his library, where there were many other photographs and portraits, and where to other eyes than his own it would be less conspicuous.

He tried it first in one place and then in another; but in each position the picture predominated and asserted itself so markedly, that Stuart gave up the idea of keeping it inconspicuous, and placed it prominently over the fireplace, where it reigned supreme above every other object in the room. It was not only the most conspicuous object there, but the living quality which it possessed in so marked a degree, and which was due to its naturalness of pose and the excellence of the likeness, made it permeate the place like a presence and with

the individuality of a real person. Stuart observed this effect with amused interest, and noted also that the photographs of other women had become commonplace in comparison like lithographs in a shop-window, and that the more masculine accessories of a bachelor's apartment had grown suddenly aggressive and out of keeping. The liquor-case and the racks of arms and of barbarous weapons which he had collected with such pride seemed to have lost their former value and meaning, and he instinctively began to gather up the mass of books and maps and photographs and pipes and gloves which lay scattered upon the table, and to put them in their proper place, or to shove them out of sight altogether. "If I'm to live up to that picture," he thought, "I must see that George keeps this room in better order—and I must stop wandering round here in my bath-robe."

His mind continued on the picture while he was dressing, and he was so absorbed in it and in analyzing the effect it had had upon him, that his servant spoke twice before he heard him.

"No," he answered, "I shall not dine here to-night." Dining at home was with him a very simple affair, and a somewhat lonely one, and he avoided it almost nightly by indulging himself in a more expensive fashion.

But even as he spoke an idea came to Stuart

which made him reconsider his determination, and which struck him as so amusing, that he stopped pulling at his tie and smiled delightedly at himself in the glass before him.

"Yes," he said, still smiling, "I will dine here to-night. Get me anything in a hurry. You need not wait now; go get the dinner up as soon as possible."

The effect which the photograph of Miss Delamar had upon him, and the transformation it had accomplished in his room, had been as great as would have marked the presence there of the girl herself. While considering this it had come to Stuart, like a flash of inspiration, that here was a way by which he could test the responsibilities and conditions of married life without compromising either himself or the girl to whom he would suppose himself to be married.

"I will put that picture at the head of the table," he said, "and I will play that it is she herself, her own, beautiful, lovely self, and I will talk to her and exchange views with her, and make her answer me just as she would were we actually married and settled." He looked at his watch and found it was just seven o'clock. "I will begin now," he said, "and I will keep up the delusion until midnight. To-night is the best time to try the experiment, because the picture is new now, and its

.nfluence will be all the more real. In a few weeks it may have lost some of its freshness and reality and will have become one of the fixtures in the room."

Stuart decided that under these new conditions it would be more pleasant to dine at Delmonico's, and he was on the point of asking the Picture what she thought of it, when he remembered that while it had been possible for him to make a practice of dining at that place as a bachelor, he could not now afford so expensive a luxury, and he decided that he had better economize in that particular and go instead to one of the *table d'hôte* restaurants in the neighborhood. He regretted not having thought of this sooner, for he did not care to dine at a *table d'hôte* in evening dress, as in some places it rendered him conspicuous. So, sooner than have this happen he decided to dine at home, as he had originally intended when he first thought of attempting this experiment, and then conducted the Picture in to dinner and placed her in an armchair facing him, with the candles full upon the face.

"Now this is something like," he exclaimed, joyously. "I can't imagine anything better than this. Here we are all to ourselves with no one to bother us, with no chaperone, or chaperone's husband either, which is generally worse. Why is it, my

dear," he asked, gayly, in a tone that he considered affectionate and husbandly, "that the attractive chaperones are always handicapped by such stupid husbands, and vice versa?"

"If that is true," replied the Picture, or replied Stuart, rather, for the picture, "I cannot be a very attractive chaperone." Stuart bowed politely at this, and then considered the point it had raised as to whether he had, in assuming both characters, the right to pay himself compliments. He decided against himself in this particular instance, but agreed that he was not responsible for anything the Picture might say, so long as he sincerely and fairly tried to make it answer him as he thought the original would do under like circumstances. From what he knew of the original under other conditions, he decided that he could give a very close imitation of her point of view.

Stuart's interest in his dinner was so real that he found himself neglecting his wife, and he had to pull himself up to his duty with a sharp reproof. After smiling back at her for a moment or two until his servant had again left them alone, he asked her to tell him what she had been doing during the day.

"Oh, nothing very important," said the Picture. "I went shopping in the morning and——"

Stuart stopped himself and considered this last

remark doubtfully. "Now, how do I know she would go shopping?" he asked himself. "People from Harlem and women who like bargain-counters, and who eat chocolate meringue for lunch, and then stop in at a continuous performance, go shopping. It must be the comic-paper sort of wives who go about matching shades and buying hooks and eyes. Yes, I must have made Miss Delamar's understudy misrepresent her. I beg your pardon, my dear," he said aloud to the Picture. "You did *not* go shopping this morning. You probably went to a woman's luncheon somewhere. Tell me about that."

"Oh, yes, I went to lunch with the Antwerps," said the Picture, "and they had that Russian woman there who is getting up subscriptions for the Siberian prisoners. It's rather fine of her, because it exiles her from Russia. And she is a princess."

"That's nothing," Stuart interrupted; "they're all princesses when you see them on Broadway."

"I beg your pardon," said the Picture.

"It's of no consequence," said Stuart, apologetically, "it's a comic song. I forgot you didn't like comic songs. Well—go on."

"Oh, then I went to a tea, and then I stopped in to hear Madame Ruvier read a paper on the Ethics of Ibsen, and she——"

Stuart's voice had died away gradually, and he

caught himself wondering whether he had told George to lay in a fresh supply of cigars. "I beg your pardon," he said, briskly, "I was listening, but I was just wondering whether I had any cigars left. You were saying that you had been at Madame Ruvier's, and——"

"I am afraid that you were not interested," said the Picture. "Never mind, it's my fault. Sometimes I think I ought to do things of more interest, so that I should have something to talk to you about when you come home."

Stuart wondered at what hour he would come home now that he was married. As a bachelor he had been in the habit of stopping on his way uptown from the law-office at the club, or to take tea at the houses of the different girls he liked. Of course he could not do that now as a married man. He would instead have to limit his calls to married women, as all the other married men of his acquaintance did. But at the moment he could not think of any attractive married women who would like his dropping in on them in such a familiar manner, and the other sort did not as yet appeal to him.

He seated himself in front of the coal-fire in the library, with the Picture in a chair close beside him, and as he puffed pleasantly on his cigar he thought how well this suited him, and how de-

lightful it was to find content in so simple and continuing a pleasure. He could almost feel the pressure of his wife's hand as it lay in his own, as they sat in silent sympathy looking into the friendly glow of the fire.

There was a long, pleasant pause.

"They're giving Sloane a dinner to-night at the 'Travellers',' " Stuart said, at last, "in honor of his going to Abyssinia."

Stuart pondered for some short time as to what sort of a reply Miss Delamar's understudy ought to make to this innocent remark. He recalled the fact that on numerous occasions the original had shown not only a lack of knowledge of far-away places, but, what was more trying, a lack of interest as well. For the moment he could not see her robbed of her pretty environment and tramping through undiscovered countries at his side. So the Picture's reply, when it came, was strictly in keeping with several remarks which Miss Delamar herself had made to him in the past.

"Yes," said the Picture, politely, "and where is Abyssinia—in India, isn't it?"

"No, not exactly," corrected Stuart, mildly; "you pass it on your way to India, though, as you go through the Red Sea. Sloane is taking Winchesters with him and a double express and a 'five fifty.' He wants to test their penetration. I think

myself that the express is the best, but he says Selous and Chanler think very highly of the Winchester. I don't know, I never shot a rhinoceros. The time I killed that elephant," he went on, pointing at two tusks that stood with some assegais in a corner, "I used an express, and I had to let go with both barrels. I suppose, though, if I'd needed a third shot, I'd have wished it was a Winchester. He was charging the smoke, you see, and I couldn't get away because I'd caught my foot—but I told you about that, didn't I?" Stuart interrupted himself to ask politely.

"Yes," said the Picture, cheerfully, "I remember it very well; it was very foolish of you."

Stuart straightened himself with a slightly injured air and avoided the Picture's eye. He had been stopped midway in what was one of his favorite stories, and it took a brief space of time for him to recover himself, and to sink back again into the pleasant lethargy in which he had been basking.

"Still," he said, "I think the express is the better gun."

"Oh, is an 'express' a gun?" exclaimed the Picture, with sudden interest. "Of course, I might have known."

Stuart turned in his chair, and surveyed the Picture in some surprise. "But, my dear girl," he

remonstrated, kindly, "why didn't you ask, if you didn't know what I was talking about? What did you suppose it was?"

"I didn't know," said the Picture; "I thought it was something to do with his luggage. Abyssinia sounds so far away," she explained, smiling sweetly. "You can't expect one to be interested in such queer places, can you?"

"No," Stuart answered, reluctantly, and looking steadily at the fire, "I suppose not. But you see, my dear," he said, "I'd have gone with him if I hadn't married you, and so I am naturally interested in his outfit. They wanted me to make a comparative study of the little semi-independent states down there, and of how far the Italian Government allows them to rule themselves. That's what I was to have done."

But the Picture hastened to reassure him. "Oh, you mustn't think," she exclaimed, quickly, "that I mean to keep you at home. I love to travel, too. I want you to go on exploring places just as you've always done, only now I will go with you. We might do the Cathedral towns, for instance."

"The what!" gasped Stuart, raising his head. "Oh, yes, of course," he added, hurriedly, sinking back into his chair with a slightly bewildered expression. "That would be very nice. Perhaps your mother would like to go, too; it's not a dan-

gerous expedition, is it? I *was* thinking of taking you on a trip through the South Seas—but I suppose the Cathedral towns are just as exciting. Or we might even penetrate as far into the interior as the English lakes and read Wordsworth and Coleridge as we go."

Miss Delamar's understudy observed him closely for a moment, but he made no sign, and so she turned her eyes again to the fire with a slightly troubled look. She had not a strong sense of humor, but she was very beautiful.

Stuart's conscience troubled him for the next few moments, and he endeavored to make up for his impatience of the moment before by telling the Picture how particularly well she was looking.

"It seems almost selfish to keep it all to myself," he mused.

"You don't mean," inquired the Picture, with tender anxiety, "that you want anyone else here, do you? I'm sure I could be content to spend every evening like this. I've had enough of going out and talking to people I don't care about. Two seasons," she added, with the superior air of one who has put away childish things, "was quite enough of it for me."

"Well, I never took it as seriously as that," said Stuart, "but, of course, I don't want anyone else here to spoil our evening. It is perfect."

He assured himself that it *was* perfect, but he wondered what was the loyal thing for a married couple to do when the conversation came to a dead stop. And did the conversation come to a stop because they preferred to sit in silent sympathy and communion, or because they had nothing interesting to talk about? Stuart doubted if silence was the truest expression of the most perfect confidence and sympathy. He generally found when he was interested, that either he or his companion talked all the time. It was when he was bored that he sat silent. But it was probably different with married people. Possibly they thought of each other during these pauses, and of their own affairs and interests, and then he asked himself how many interests could one fairly retain with which the other had nothing to do?

"I suppose," thought Stuart, "that I had better compromise and read aloud. Should you like me to read aloud?" he asked, doubtfully.

The Picture brightened perceptibly at this, and said that she thought that would be charming. "We might make it quite instructive," she suggested, entering eagerly into the idea. "We ought to agree to read so many pages every night. Suppose we begin with Guizot's 'History of France.' I have always meant to read that, the illustrations look so interesting."

"Yes, we might do that," assented Stuart, doubtfully. "It is in six volumes, isn't it? Suppose now, instead," he suggested, with an impartial air, "we begin that to-morrow night, and go this evening to see Seldon's new play, 'The Fool and His Money.' It's not too late, and he has saved a box for us, and Weimer and Rives and Sloane will be there, and——"

The Picture's beautiful face settled for just an instant in an expression of disappointment. "Of course," she replied, slowly, "if you wish it. But I thought you said," she went on with a sweet smile, "that this was perfect. Now you want to go out again. Isn't this better than a hot theatre? You might put up with it for one evening, don't you think?"

"Put up with it!" exclaimed Stuart, enthusiastically; "I could spend every evening so. It was only a suggestion. It wasn't that I wanted to go so much as that I thought Seldon might be a little hurt if I didn't. But I can tell him you were not feeling very well, and that we will come some other evening. He generally likes to have us there on the first night, that's all. But he'll understand."

"Oh," said the Picture, "if you put it in the light of a duty to your friend, of course we will go."

"Not at all," replied Stuart, heartily; "I will

read something. I should really prefer it. How would you like something of Browning's?"

"Oh, I read all of Browning once," said the Picture. "I think I should like something new."

Stuart gasped at this, but said nothing, and began turning over the books on the centre-table. He selected one of the monthly magazines, and choosing a story which neither of them had read, sat down comfortably in front of the fire, and finished it without interruption and to the satisfaction of the Picture and himself. The story had made the half hour pass very pleasantly, and they both commented on it with interest.

"I had an experience once myself something like that," said Stuart, with a pleased smile of recollection; "it happened in Paris"—he began with the deliberation of a man who is sure of his story—"and it turned out in much the same way. It didn't begin in Paris; it really began while we were crossing the English Channel to——"

"Oh, you mean about the Russian who took you for someone else and had you followed," said the Picture. "Yes, that was like it, except that in your case nothing happened."

Stuart took his cigar from between his lips and frowned severely at the lighted end for some little time before he spoke.

"My dear," he remonstrated, gently, "you mustn't tell me I've told you all my old stories before. It isn't fair. Now that I'm married, you see, I can't go about and have new experiences, and I've got to make use of the old ones."

"Oh, I'm so sorry," exclaimed the Picture, remorsefully. "I didn't mean to be rude. Please tell me about it. I should like to hear it again, ever so much. I *should* like to hear it again, really."

"Nonsense," said Stuart, laughing and shaking his head. "I was only joking; personally I hate people who tell long stories. That doesn't matter. I was thinking of something else."

He continued thinking of something else, which was, that though he had been in jest when he spoke of having given up the chance of meeting fresh experiences, he had nevertheless described a condition, and a painfully true one. His real life seemed to have stopped, and he saw himself in the future looking back and referring to it, as though it were the career of an entirely different person, of a young man, with quick sympathies which required satisfying, as any appetite requires food. And he had an uncomfortable doubt that these many ever-ready sympathies would rebel if fed on only one diet.

The Picture did not interrupt him in his

thoughts, and he let his mind follow his eyes as they wandered over the objects above him on the mantel-shelf. They all meant something from the past—a busy, wholesome past which had formed habits of thought and action, habits he could no longer enjoy alone, and which, on the other hand, it was quite impossible for him to share with anyone else. He was no longer to be alone.

Stuart stirred uneasily in his chair and poked at the fire before him.

"Do you remember the day you came to see me," said the Picture, sentimentally, "and built the fire yourself and lighted some girl's letters to make it burn?"

"Yes," said Stuart, "that is, I *said* that they were some girl's letters. It made it more picturesque. I am afraid they were bills. I should say I did remember it," he continued, enthusiastically. "You wore a black dress and little red slippers with big black rosettes, and you looked as beautiful as—as night—as a moonlight night."

The Picture frowned slightly.

"You are always telling me about how I looked," she complained; "can't you remember any time when we were together without remembering what I had on and how I appeared?"

"I cannot," said Stuart, promptly. "I can recall lots of other things besides, but I can't forget

how you looked. You have a fashion of emphasizing episodes in that way which is entirely your own. But, as I say, I can remember something else. Do you remember, for instance, when we went up to West Point on that yacht? Wasn't it a grand day, with the autumn leaves on both sides of the Hudson, and the dress parade, and the dance afterward at the hotel?"

"Yes, I should think I did," said the Picture, smiling. "You spent all your time examining cannon, and talking to the men about 'firing in open order,' and left me all alone."

"Left you all alone! I like that," laughed Stuart; "all alone with about eighteen officers."

"Well, but that was natural," returned the Picture. "They were men. It's natural for a girl to talk to men, but why should a man want to talk to men?"

"Well, I know better than that now," said Stuart.

He proceeded to show that he knew better by remaining silent for the next half hour, during which time he continued to wonder whether this effort to keep up a conversation was not radically wrong. He thought of several things he might say, but he argued that it was an impossible situation where a man had to make conversation with his own wife.

The clock struck ten as he sat waiting, and he moved uneasily in his chair.

"What is it?" asked the Picture; "what makes you so restless?"

Stuart regarded the Picture timidly for a moment before he spoke. "I was just thinking," he said, doubtfully, "that we might run down after all, and take a look in at the last act; it's not too late even now. They're sure to run behind on the first night. And then," he urged, "we can go around and see Seldon. You have never been behind the scenes, have you? It's very interesting."

"No, I have not; but if we do," remonstrated the Picture, pathetically, "you *know* all those men will come trooping home with us. You know they will."

"But that's very complimentary," said Stuart. "Why, I like my friends to like my wife."

"Yes, but you know how they stay when they get here," she answered; "I don't believe they ever sleep. Don't you remember the last supper you gave me before we were married, when Mrs. Starr and you all were discussing Mr. Seldon's play? She didn't make a move to go until half-past two, and I was *that* sleepy I couldn't keep my eyes open."

"Yes," said Stuart, "I remember. I'm sorry. I thought it was very interesting. Seldon changed

the whole second act on account of what she said. Well, after this," he laughed with cheerful desperation, "I think I shall make up for the part of a married man in a pair of slippers and a dressing-gown, and then perhaps I won't be tempted to roam abroad at night."

"You must wear the gown they are going to give you at Oxford," said the Picture, smiling placidly. "The one Aunt Lucy was telling me about. Why do they give you a gown?" she asked. "It seems such an odd thing to do."

"The gown comes with the degree, I believe," said Stuart.

"But why do they give *you* a degree?" persisted the Picture; "you never studied at Oxford, did you?"

Stuart moved slightly in his chair and shook his head. "I thought I told you," he said, gently. "No, I never studied there. I wrote some books on—things, and they liked them."

"Oh, yes, I remember now, you did tell me," said the Picture; "and I told Aunt Lucy about it, and said we would be in England during the season when you got your degree, and she said you must be awfully clever to get it. You see—she does appreciate you, and you always treat her so distantly."

"Do I?" said Stuart, quietly. "I'm sorry."

"Will you have your portrait painted in it?" asked the Picture.

"In what?"

"In the gown. You are not listening," said the Picture, reproachfully. "You ought to. Aunt Lucy says it's a beautiful shade of red silk, and very long. Is it?"

"I don't know," said Stuart. He shook his head, and dropping his chin into his hands, stared coldly down into the fire. He tried to persuade himself that he had been vainglorious, and that he had given too much weight to the honor which the University of Oxford would bestow upon him; that he had taken the degree too seriously, and that the Picture's view of it was the view of the rest of the world. But he could not convince himself that he was entirely at fault.

"Is it too late to begin on Guizot?" suggested his Picture, as an alternative to his plan. "It sounds so improving."

"Yes, it is much too late," answered Stuart, decidedly. "Besides, I don't want to be improved. I want to be amused, or inspired, or scolded. The chief good of friends is that they do one of these three things, and a wife should do all three."

"Which shall I do?" asked the Picture, smiling good-humoredly.

Stuart looked at the beautiful face and at the

reclining figure of the woman to whom he was to turn for sympathy for the rest of his life, and felt a cold shiver of terror, that passed as quickly as it came. He reached out his hand and placed it on the arm of the chair where his wife's hand should have been, and patted the place kindly. He would shut his eyes to everything but that she was good and sweet and his wife. Whatever else she lacked that her beauty had covered up and hidden, and the want of which had lain unsuspected in their previous formal intercourse, could not be mended now. He would settle his step to hers, and eliminate all those interests from his life which were not hers as well. He had chosen a beautiful idol, and not a companion, for a wife. He had tried to warm his hands at the fire of a diamond.

Stuart's eyes closed wearily as though to shut out the memories of the past, or the foreknowledge of what the future was sure to be. His head sank forward on his breast, and with his hand shading his eyes, he looked beyond, through the dying fire, into the succeeding years.

The gay little French clock on the table sounded the hour of midnight briskly, with a pert insistent clamor, and at the same instant a boisterous and unruly knocking answered it from outside the library door.

Stuart rose uncertainly from his chair and surveyed the tiny clock face with a startled expression of bewilderment and relief.

"Stuart!" his friends called impatiently from the hall. "Stuart, let us in!" and without waiting further for recognition a merry company of gentlemen pushed their way noisily into the room.

"Where the devil have you been?" demanded Weimer. "You don't deserve to be spoken to at all after quitting us like that. But Seldon is so good-natured," he went on, "that he sent us after you. It was a great success, and he made a rattling good speech, and you missed the whole thing; and you ought to be ashamed of yourself. We've asked half the people in front to supper—two stray Englishmen, all the Wilton girls and their governor, and the chap that wrote the play. And Seldon and his brother Sam are coming as soon as they get their make-up off. Don't stand there like that, but hurry. What have you been doing?"

Stuart gave a nervous, anxious laugh. "Oh, don't ask me," he cried. "It was awful. I've been trying an experiment, and I had to keep it up until midnight, and—I'm so glad you fellows have come," he continued, halting midway in his explanation. "I *was* blue."

"You've been asleep in front of the fire," said young Sloane, "and you've been dreaming."

"Perhaps," laughed Stuart, gayly, "perhaps. But I'm awake now, in any event. Sloane, old man," he cried, dropping both hands on the youngster's shoulders, "how much money have you? Enough to take me to Gibraltar? They can cable me the rest."

"Hoorah!" shouted Sloane, waltzing from one end of the room to the other. "And we're off to Ab-yss-in-ia in the morn-ing," he sang. "There's plenty in my money belt," he cried, slapping his sides; "you can hear the ten-pound notes crackle whenever I breathe, and it's all yours, my dear boy, and welcome. And I'll prove to you that the Winchester is the better gun."

"All right," returned Stuart, gayly, "and I'll try to prove that the Italians don't know how to govern a native state. But who is giving this supper, anyway?" he demanded. "That is the main thing—that's what I want to know."

"You've got to pack, haven't you?" suggested Rives.

"I'll pack when I get back," said Stuart, struggling into his greatcoat, and searching in his pockets for his gloves. "Besides, my things are always ready and there's plenty of time; the boat doesn't leave for six hours yet."

"We'll all come back and help," said Weimer.

"Then I'll never get away," laughed Stuart.

He was radiant, happy, and excited, like a boy back from school for the holidays. But when they had reached the pavement, he halted and ran his hand down into his pocket, as though feeling for his latch-key, and stood looking doubtfully at his friends.

"What is it now?" asked Rives, impatiently. "Have you forgotten something?"

Stuart looked back at the front door in momentary indecision.

"Ye-es," he answered. "I did forget something. But it doesn't matter," he added, cheerfully, taking Sloane's arm.

"Come on," he said, "and so Seldon made a hit, did he? I am glad—and tell me, old man, how long will we have to wait at Gib for the P. & O.?"

Stuart's servant had heard the men trooping down the stairs, laughing and calling to one another as they went, and judging from this that they had departed for the night, he put out all the lights in the library and closed the piano, and lifted the windows to clear the room of the tobacco-smoke. He did not notice the beautiful photograph sitting upright in the arm-chair before the fireplace, and so left it alone in the deserted library.

The cold night-air swept in through the open

window and chilled the silent room, and the dead coals in the grate dropped one by one into the fender with a dismal echoing clatter; but the Picture still sat in the arm-chair with the same graceful pose and the same lovely expression, and smiled sweetly at the encircling darkness.

ON THE FEVER SHIP

On the Fever Ship

THERE were four rails around the ship's sides, the three lower ones of iron and the one on top of wood, and as he looked between them from the canvas cot he recognized them as the prison-bars which held him in. Outside his prison lay a stretch of blinding blue water which ended in a line of breakers and a yellow coast with ragged palms. Beyond that again rose a range of mountain-peaks, and, stuck upon the loftiest peak of all, a tiny block-house. It rested on the brow of the mountain against the naked sky as impudently as a cracker-box set upon the dome of a great cathedral.

As the transport rode on her anchor-chains, the iron bars around her sides rose and sank and divided the landscape with parallel lines. From his cot the officer followed this phenomenon with severe, painstaking interest. Sometimes the wooden rail swept up to the very block-house itself, and for a second of time blotted it from sight. And

again it sank to the level of the line of breakers, and wiped them out of the picture as though they were a line of chalk.

The soldier on the cot promised himself that the next swell of the sea would send the lowest rail climbing to the very top of the palm-trees or, even higher, to the base of the mountains; and when it failed to reach even the palm-trees he felt a distinct sense of ill use, of having been wronged by someone. There was no other reason for submitting to this existence save these tricks upon the wearisome, glaring landscape; and now, whoever it was who was working them did not seem to be making this effort to entertain him with any heartiness.

It was most cruel. Indeed, he decided hotly, it was not to be endured; he would bear it no longer, he would make his escape. But he knew that this move, which could be conceived in a moment's desperation, could only be carried to success with great strategy, secrecy, and careful cunning. So he fell back upon his pillow and closed his eyes, as though he were asleep, and then opening them again, turned cautiously, and spied upon his keeper. As usual, his keeper sat at the foot of the cot turning the pages of a huge paper filled with pictures of the war printed in daubs of tawdry colors. His keeper was a hard-faced boy without

human pity or consideration, a very devil of obstinacy and fiendish cruelty. To make it worse, the fiend was a person without a collar, in a suit of soiled khaki, with a curious red cross bound by a safety-pin to his left arm. He was intent upon the paper in his hands; he was holding it between his eyes and his prisoner. His vigilance had relaxed, and the moment seemed propitious. With a sudden plunge of arms and legs, the prisoner swept the bed-sheet from him, and sprang at the wooden rail and grasped the iron stanchion beside it. He had his knee pressed against the top bar and his bare toes on the iron rail beneath it. Below him the blue water waited for him. It was cool and dark and gentle and deep. It would certainly put out the fire in his bones, he thought; it might even shut out the glare of the sun which scorched his eyeballs.

But as he balanced for the leap, a swift weakness and nausea swept over him, a weight seized upon his body and limbs. He could not lift the lower foot from the iron rail, and he swayed dizzily and trembled. He trembled. He who had raced his men and beaten them up the hot hill to the trenches of San Juan. But now he was a baby in the hands of a giant, who caught him by the wrist and with an iron arm clasped him around his waist and pulled him down, and shouted, bru-

tally, "Help, some of youse, quick! he's at it again. I can't hold him."

More giants grasped him by the arms and by the legs. One of them took the hand that clung to the stanchion in both of his, and pulled back the fingers one by one, saying, "Easy now, Lieutenant—easy."

The ragged palms and the sea and block-house were swallowed up in a black fog, and his body touched the canvas cot again with a sense of homecoming and relief and rest. He wondered how he could have cared to escape from it. He found it so good to be back again that for a long time he wept quite happily, until the fiery pillow was moist and cool.

The world outside of the iron bars was like a scene in a theatre set for some great event, but the actors were never ready. He remembered confusedly a play he had once witnessed before that same scene. Indeed, he believed he had played some small part in it; but he remembered it dimly, and all trace of the men who had appeared with him in it was gone. He had reasoned it out that they were up there behind the range of mountains, because great heavy wagons and ambulances and cannon were emptied from the ships at the wharf above and were drawn away in long lines behind the ragged palms, moving always toward the passes

between the peaks. At times he was disturbed by the thought that he should be up and after them, that some tradition of duty made his presence with them imperative. There was much to be done back of the mountains. Some event of momentous import was being carried forward there, in which he held a part; but the doubt soon passed from him, and he was content to lie and watch the iron bars rising and falling between the block-house and the white surf.

If they had been only humanely kind, his lot would have been bearable, but they starved him and held him down when he wished to rise; and they would not put out the fire in the pillow, which they might easily have done by the simple expedient of throwing it over the ship's side into the sea. He himself had done this twice, but the keeper had immediately brought a fresh pillow already heated for the torture and forced it under his head.

His pleasures were very simple, and so few that he could not understand why they robbed him of them so jealously. One was to watch a green cluster of bananas that hung above him from the awning, twirling on a string. He could count as many of them as five before the bunch turned and swung lazily back again, when he could count as high as twelve; sometimes when the ship rolled heavily he could count to twenty. It was a most fascinating

game, and contented him for many hours. But when they found this out they sent for the cook to come and cut them down, and the cook carried them away to his galley.

Then, one day, a man came out from the shore, swimming through the blue water with great splashes. He was a most charming man, who spluttered and dove and twisted and lay on his back and kicked his legs in an excess of content and delight. It was a real pleasure to watch him; not for days had anything so amusing appeared on the other side of the prison-bars. But as soon as the keeper saw that the man in the water was amusing his prisoner, he leaned over the ship's side and shouted, "Sa-ay, you, don't you know there's sharks in there?"

And the swimming man said, "The h—ll there is!" and raced back to the shore like a porpoise with great lashing of the water, and ran up the beach half-way to the palms before he was satisfied to stop. Then the prisoner wept again. It was so disappointing. Life was robbed of everything now. He remembered that in a previous existence soldiers who cried were laughed at and mocked. But that was so far away and it was such an absurd superstition that he had no patience with it. For what could be more comforting to a man when he is treated cruelly than to cry. It was so

obvious an exercise, and when one is so feeble that one cannot vault a four-railed barrier it is something to feel that at least one is strong enough to cry.

He escaped occasionally, traversing space with marvellous rapidity and to great distances, but never to any successful purpose; and his flight inevitably ended in ignominious recapture and a sudden awakening in bed. At these moments the familiar and hated palms, the peaks, and the blockhouse were more hideous in their reality than the most terrifying of his nightmares.

These excursions afield were always predatory; he went forth always to seek food. With all the beautiful world from which to elect and choose, he sought out only those places where eating was studied and elevated to an art. These visits were much more vivid in their detail than any he had ever before made to these same resorts. They invariably began in a carriage, which carried him swiftly over smooth asphalt. One route brought him across a great and beautiful square, radiating with rows and rows of flickering lights; two fountains splashed in the centre of the square, and six women of stone guarded its approaches. One of the women was hung with wreaths of mourning. Ahead of him the late twilight darkened behind a great arch, which seemed to rise on the horizon

of the world, a great window into the heavens beyond. At either side strings of white and colored globes hung among the trees, and the sound of music came joyfully from theatres in the open air. He knew the restaurant under the trees to which he was now hastening, and the fountain beside it, and the very sparrows balancing on the fountain's edge; he knew every waiter at each of the tables, he felt again the gravel crunching under his feet, he saw the *maître d'hôtel* coming forward smiling to receive his command, and the waiter in the green apron bowing at his elbow, deferential and important, presenting the list of wines. But his adventure never passed that point, for he was captured again and once more bound to his cot with a close burning sheet.

Or else, he drove more sedately through the London streets in the late evening twilight, leaning expectantly across the doors of the hansom and pulling carefully at his white gloves. Other hansoms flashed past him, the occupant of each with his mind fixed on one idea—dinner. He was one of a million of people who were about to dine, or who had dined, or who were deep in dining. He was so famished, so weak for food of any quality, that the galloping horse in the hansom seemed to crawl. The lights of the Embankment passed like the lamps of a railroad station as seen from

the window of an express; and while his mind was still torn between the choice of a thin or thick soup or an immediate attack upon cold beef, he was at the door, and the *chasseur* touched his cap, and the little *chasseur* put the wicker guard over the hansom's wheel. As he jumped out he said, "Give him half-a-crown," and the driver called after him, "Thank you, sir."

It was a beautiful world, this world outside of the iron bars. Everyone in it contributed to his pleasure and to his comfort. In this world he was not starved nor man-handled. He thought of this joyfully as he leaped up the stairs, where young men with grave faces and with their hands held negligently behind their backs bowed to him in polite surprise at his speed. But they had not been starved on condensed milk. He threw his coat and hat at one of them, and came down the hall fearfully and quite weak with dread lest it should not be real. His voice was shaking when he asked Ellis if he had reserved a table. The place was all so real, it must be true this time. The way Ellis turned and ran his finger down the list showed it was real, because Ellis always did that, even when he knew there would not be an empty table for an hour. The room was crowded with beautiful women; under the light of the red shades they looked kind and approachable, and there was

food on every table, and iced drinks in silver buckets. It was with the joy of great relief that he heard Ellis say to his underling, "Numéro cinq, sur la terrace, un couvert." It was real at last. Outside, the Thames lay a great gray shadow. The lights of the Embankment flashed and twinkled across it, the tower of the House of Commons rose against the sky, and here, inside, the waiter was hurrying toward him carrying a smoking plate of rich soup with a pungent, intoxicating odor.

And then the ragged palms, the glaring sun, the immovable peaks, and the white surf stood again before him. The iron rails swept up and sank again, the fever sucked at his bones, and the pillow scorched his cheek.

One morning for a brief moment he came back to real life again and lay quite still, seeing everything about him with clear eyes and for the first time, as though he had but just that instant been lifted over the ship's side. His keeper, glancing up, found the prisoner's eyes considering him curiously, and recognized the change. The instinct of discipline brought him to his feet with his fingers at his sides.

"Is the Lieutenant feeling better?"

The Lieutenant surveyed him gravely.

"You are one of our hospital stewards."

"Yes, Lieutenant."

"Why ar'n't you with the regiment?"

"I was wounded, too, sir. I got it same time you did, Lieutenant."

"Am I wounded? Of course, I remember. Is this a hospital ship?"

The steward shrugged his shoulders. "She's one of the transports. They have turned her over to the fever cases."

The Lieutenant opened his lips to ask another question; but his own body answered that one, and for a moment he lay silent.

"Do they know up North that I—that I'm all right?"

"Oh, yes, the papers had it in—there was pictures of the Lieutenant in some of them."

"Then I've been ill some time?"

"Oh, about eight days."

The soldier moved uneasily, and the nurse in him became uppermost.

"I guess the Lieutenant hadn't better talk any more," he said. It was his voice now which held authority.

The Lieutenant looked out at the palms and the silent gloomy mountains and the empty coastline, where the same wave was rising and falling with weary persistence.

"Eight days," he said. His eyes shut quickly,

as though with a sudden touch of pain. He turned his head and sought for the figure at the foot of the cot. Already the figure had grown faint and was receding and swaying.

"Has anyone written or cabled?" the Lieutenant spoke, hurriedly. He was fearful lest the figure should disappear altogether before he could obtain his answer. "Has anyone come?"

"Why, they couldn't get here, Lieutenant, not yet."

The voice came very faintly. "You go to sleep now, and I'll run and fetch some letters and telegrams. When you wake up, maybe I'll have a lot for you."

But the Lieutenant caught the nurse by the wrist, and crushed his hand in his own thin fingers. They were hot, and left the steward's skin wet with perspiration. The Lieutenant laughed gayly.

"You see, Doctor," he said, briskly, "that you can't kill me. I can't die. I've got to live, you understand. Because, sir, she said she would come. She said if I was wounded, or if I was ill, she would come to me. She didn't care what people thought. She would come anyway and nurse me—well, she will come.

"So, Doctor—old man—" He plucked at the steward's sleeve, and stroked his hand eagerly,

"old man—" he began again, beseechingly, "you'll not let me die until she comes, will you? What? No, I know I won't die. Nothing made by man can kill me. No, not until she comes. Then, after that—eight days, she'll be here soon, any moment? What? You think so, too? Don't you? Surely, yes, any moment. Yes, I'll go to sleep now, and when you see her rowing out from shore you wake me. You'll know her; you can't make a mistake. She is like—no, there is no one like her—but you can't make a mistake."

That day strange figures began to mount the sides of the ship, and to occupy its every turn and angle of space. Some of them fell on their knees and slapped the bare deck with their hands, and laughed and cried out, "Thank God, I'll see God's country again!" Some of them were regulars, bound in bandages; some were volunteers, dirty and hollow-eyed, with long beards on boys' faces. Some came on crutches; others with their arms around the shoulders of their comrades, staring ahead of them with a fixed smile, their lips drawn back and their teeth protruding. At every second step they stumbled, and the face of each was swept by swift ripples of pain.

They lay on cots so close together that the nurses could not walk between them. They lay on the wet decks, in the scuppers, and along the transoms

and hatches. They were like shipwrecked mariners clinging to a raft, and they asked nothing more than that the ship's bow be turned toward home. Once satisfied as to that, they relaxed into a state of self-pity and miserable oblivion to their environment, from which hunger nor nausea nor aching bones could shake them.

The hospital steward touched the Lieutenant lightly on the shoulder.

"We are going North, sir," he said. "The transport's ordered North to New York, with these volunteers and the sick and wounded. Do you hear me, sir?"

The Lieutenant opened his eyes. "Has she come?" he asked.

"Gee!" exclaimed the hospital steward. He glanced impatiently at the blue mountains and the yellow coast, from which the transport was drawing rapidly away.

"Well, I can't see her coming just now," he said. "But she will," he added.

"You let me know at once when she comes."

"Why, cert'nly, of course," said the steward.

Three trained nurses came over the side just before the transport started North. One was a large, motherly looking woman, with a German accent. She had been a trained nurse, first in Berlin, and later in the London Hospital in White-

chapel, and at Bellevue. The nurse was dressed in white, and wore a little silver medal at her throat; and she was strong enough to lift a volunteer out of his cot and hold him easily in her arms, while one of the convalescents pulled his cot out of the rain. Some of the men called her "nurse"; others, who wore scapulars around their necks, called her "Sister"; and the officers of the medical staff addressed her as Miss Bergen.

Miss Bergen halted beside the cot of the Lieutenant and asked, "Is this the fever case you spoke about, Doctor—the one you want moved to the officers' ward?" She slipped her hand up under his sleeve and felt his wrist.

"His pulse is very high," she said to the steward. "When did you take his temperature?" She drew a little morocco case from her pocket and from that took a clinical thermometer, which she shook up and down, eying the patient meanwhile with a calm, impersonal scrutiny. The Lieutenant raised his head and stared up at the white figure beside his cot. His eyes opened and then shut quickly, with a startled look, in which doubt struggled with wonderful happiness. His hand stole out fearfully and warily until it touched her apron, and then, finding it was real, he clutched it desperately, and twisting his face and body toward her, pulled her down, clasping her hands in both

of his, and pressing them close to his face and eyes and lips. He put them from him for an instant, and looked at her through his tears.

"Sweetheart," he whispered, "sweetheart, I knew you'd come."

As the nurse knelt on the deck beside him, her thermometer slipped from her fingers and broke, and she gave an exclamation of annoyance. The young Doctor picked up the pieces and tossed them overboard. Neither of them spoke, but they smiled appreciatively. The Lieutenant was looking at the nurse with the wonder and hope and hunger of soul in his eyes with which a dying man looks at the cross the priest holds up before him. What he saw where the German nurse was kneeling was a tall, fair girl with great bands and masses of hair, with a head rising like a lily from a firm, white throat, set on broad shoulders above a straight back and sloping breast—a tall, beautiful creature, half-girl, half-woman, who looked back at him shyly, but steadily.

"Listen," he said.

The voice of the sick man was so sure and so sane that the young Doctor started, and moved nearer to the head of the cot. "Listen, dearest," the Lieutenant whispered. "I wanted to tell you before I came South. But I did not dare; and then I was afraid something might happen to me, and

"Listen," he said.

I could never tell you, and you would never know. So I wrote it to you in the will I made at Baiquiri, the night before the landing. If you hadn't come now, you would have learned it in that way. You would have read there that there never was anyone but you; the rest were all dream people, foolish, silly—mad. There is no one else in the world but you; you have been the only thing in life that has counted. I thought I might do something down here that would make you care. But I got shot going up a hill, and after that I wasn't able to do anything. It was very hot, and the hills were on fire; and they took me prisoner, and kept me tied down here, burning on these coals. I can't live much longer, but now that I have told you I can have peace. They tried to kill me before you came; but they didn't know I loved you, they didn't know that men who love you can't die. They tried to starve my love for you, to burn it out of me; they tried to reach it with their knives. But my love for you is my soul, and they can't kill a man's soul. Dear heart, I have lived because you lived. Now that you know—now that you understand—what does it matter?"

Miss Bergen shook her head with great vigor. "Nonsense," she said, cheerfully. "You are not going to die. As soon as we move you out of this rain, and some food cook——"

"Good God!" cried the young Doctor, savagely. "Do you want to kill him?"

When she spoke, the patient had thrown his arms heavily across his face, and had fallen back, lying rigid on the pillow.

The Doctor led the way across the prostrate bodies, apologizing as he went. "I am sorry I spoke so quickly," he said, "but he thought you were real. I mean he thought you were someone he really knew——"

"He was just delirious," said the German nurse, calmly.

The Doctor mixed himself a Scotch and soda and drank it with a single gesture.

"Ugh!" he said to the ward-room. "I feel as though I'd been opening another man's letters."

The transport drove through the empty seas with heavy, clumsy upheavals, rolling like a buoy. Having been originally intended for the freight-carrying trade, she had no sympathy with hearts that beat for a sight of their native land, or for lives that counted their remaining minutes by the throbbing of her engines. Occasionally, without apparent reason, she was thrown violently from her course; but it was invariably the case that when her stern went to starboard, something splashed in the water on her port side and drifted past her,

until, when it had cleared the blades of her propeller, a voice cried out, and she was swung back on her home-bound track again.

The Lieutenant missed the familiar palms and the tiny block-house; and seeing nothing beyond the iron rails but great wastes of gray water, he decided he was on board a prison-ship, or that he had been strapped to a raft and cast adrift. People came for hours at a time and stood at the foot of his cot, and talked with him and he to them—people he had loved and people he had long forgotten, some of whom he had thought were dead. One of them he could have sworn he had seen buried in a deep trench, and covered with branches of palmetto. He had heard the bugler, with tears choking him, sound "taps"; and with his own hand he had placed the dead man's campaign hat on the mound of fresh earth above the grave. Yet here he was still alive, and he came with other men of his troop to speak to him; but when he reached out to them they were gone—the real and the unreal, the dead and the living—and even She disappeared whenever he tried to take her hand, and sometimes the hospital steward drove her away.

"Did that young lady say when she was coming back again?" he asked the steward.

"The young lady! What young lady?" asked the steward, wearily.

"The one who has been sitting there," he answered. He pointed with his gaunt hand at the man in the next cot.

"Oh, that young lady. Yes, she's coming back. She's just gone below to fetch you some hard-tack."

The young volunteer in the next cot whined grievously.

"That crazy man gives me the creeps," he groaned. "He's always waking me up, and looking at me as though he was going to eat me."

"Shut your head," said the steward. "He's a better man crazy than you'll ever be with the little sense you've got. And he has two Mauser holes in him. Crazy, eh? It's a damned good thing for you that there was about four thousand of us regulars just as crazy as him, or you'd never seen the top of the hill."

One morning there was a great commotion on deck, and all the convalescents balanced themselves on the rail, shivering in their pajamas, and pointed one way. The transport was moving swiftly and smoothly through water as flat as a lake, and making a great noise with her steam-whistle. The noise was echoed by many more steam-whistles; and the ghosts of out-bound ships and tugs and excursion steamers ran past her out of the mist and disappeared, saluting joyously. All of the

excursion steamers had a heavy list to the side nearest the transport, and the ghosts on them crowded to that rail and waved handkerchiefs and cheered. The fog lifted suddenly, and between the iron rails the Lieutenant saw high green hills on either side of a great harbor. Houses and trees and thousands of masts swept past like a panorama; and beyond was a mirage of three cities, with curling smoke-wreaths and sky-reaching buildings, and a great swinging bridge, and a giant statue of a woman waving a welcome home.

The Lieutenant surveyed the spectacle with cynical disbelief. He was far too wise and far too cunning to be bewitched by it. In his heart he pitied the men about him, who laughed wildly, and shouted, and climbed recklessly to the rails and ratlines. He had been deceived too often not to know that it was not real. He knew from cruel experience that in a few moments the tall buildings would crumble away, the thousands of columns of white smoke that flashed like snow in the sun, the busy, shrieking tug-boats, and the great statue would vanish into the sea, leaving it gray and bare. He closed his eyes and shut the vision out. It was so beautiful that it tempted him; but he would not be mocked, and he buried his face in his hands. They were carrying the farce too far, he thought. It was really too absurd; for now they were at a

wharf which was so real that, had he not known by previous suffering, he would have been utterly deceived by it. And there were great crowds of smiling, cheering people, and a waiting guard of honor in fresh uniforms, and rows of police pushing the people this way and that; and these men about him were taking it all quite seriously, and making ready to disembark, carrying their blanket-rolls and rifles with them.

A band was playing joyously, and the man in the next cot, who was being lifted to a stretcher, said, "There's the Governor and his staff; that's him in the high hat." It was really very well done. The Custom-house and the Elevated Railroad and Castle Garden were as like to life as a photograph, and the crowd was as well handled as a mob in a play. His heart ached for it so that he could not bear the pain, and he turned his back on it. It was cruel to keep it up so long. His keeper lifted him in his arms, and pulled him into a dirty uniform which had belonged, apparently, to a much larger man—a man who had been killed probably, for there were dark-brown marks of blood on the tunic and breeches. When he tried to stand on his feet, Castle Garden and the Battery disappeared in a black cloud of night, just as he knew they would; but when he opened his eyes from the stretcher, they had returned again. It

was a most remarkably vivid vision. They kept it up so well. Now the young Doctor and the hospital steward were pretending to carry him down a gangplank and into an open space; and he saw quite close to him a long line of policemen, and behind them thousands of faces, some of them women's faces—women who pointed at him and then shook their heads and cried, and pressed their hands to their cheeks, still looking at him. He wondered why they cried. He did not know them, nor did they know him. No one knew him; these people were only ghosts.

There was a quick parting in the crowd. A man he had once known shoved two of the policemen to one side, and he heard a girl's voice speaking his name, like a sob; and She came running out across the open space and fell on her knees beside the stretcher, and bent down over him, and he was clasped in two young, firm arms.

"Of course it is not real, of course it is not She," he assured himself. "Because She would not do such a thing. Before all these people She would not do it."

But he trembled and his heart throbbed so cruelly that he could not bear the pain.

She was pretending to cry.

"They wired us you had started for Tampa on the hospital ship," She was saying, "and Aunt and

I went all the way there before we heard you had been sent North. We have been on the cars a week. That is why I missed you. Do you understand? It was not my fault. I tried to come. Indeed, I tried to come."

She turned her head and looked up fearfully at the young Doctor.

"Tell me, why does he look at me like that?" she asked. "He doesn't know me. Is he very ill? Tell me the truth." She drew in her breath quickly. "Of course you will tell me the truth."

When she asked the question he felt her arms draw tight about his shoulders. It was as though she was holding him to herself, and from someone who had reached out for him. In his trouble he turned to his old friend and keeper. His voice was hoarse and very low.

"Is this the same young lady who was on the transport—the one you used to drive away?"

In his embarrassment, the hospital steward blushed under his tan, and stammered.

"Of course it's the same young lady," the Doctor answered, briskly. "And I won't let them drive her away." He turned to her, smiling gravely. "I think his condition has ceased to be dangerous, madam," he said.

People who in a former existence had been his friends, and Her brother, gathered about his

stretcher and bore him through the crowd and lifted him into a carriage filled with cushions, among which he sank lower and lower. Then She sat beside him, and he heard Her brother say to the coachman, "Home, and drive slowly and keep on the asphalt."

The carriage moved forward, and She put her arm about him, and his head fell on her shoulder, and neither of them spoke. The vision had lasted so long now that he was torn with the joy that after all it might be real. But he could not bear the awakening if it were not, so he raised his head fearfully and looked up into the beautiful eyes above him. His brows were knit, and he struggled with a great doubt and an awful joy.

"Dearest," he said, "is it real?"

"Is it real?" she repeated.

Even as a dream, it was so wonderfully beautiful that he was satisfied if it could only continue so, if but for a little while.

"Do you think," he begged again, trembling, "that it is going to last much longer?"

She smiled, and, bending her head slowly, kissed him.

"It is going to last—always," she said.

THE MAN WITH ONE TALENT

The Man with One Talent

THE mass-meeting in the Madison Square Garden which was to help set Cuba free was finished, and the people were pushing their way out of the overheated building into the snow and sleet of the streets. They had been greatly stirred and the spell of the last speaker still hung so heavily upon them that as they pressed down the long corridor they were still speaking loudly in his praise.

A young man moved eagerly among them, and pushed his way to wherever a voice was raised above the rest. He strained forward, listening openly, as though he tried to judge the effect of the meeting by the verdict of those about him.

But the words he overheard seemed to clash with what he wished them to be, and the eager look on his face changed to one of doubt and of grave disappointment. When he had reached the sidewalk he stopped and stood looking back alternately into the lighted hall and at the hurrying crowds which were dispersing rapidly. He made a movement as though he would recall them, as

though he felt they were still unconvinced, as though there was much still left unsaid.

A fat stranger halted at his elbow to light his cigar, and glancing up nodded his head approvingly.

"Fine speaker, Senator Stanton, ain't he?" he said.

The young man answered eagerly. "Yes," he assented, "he is a great orator, but how could he help but speak well with such a subject?"

"Oh, you ought to have heard him last November at Tammany Hall," the fat stranger answered. "He wasn't quite up to himself to-night. He wasn't so interested. Those Cubans are foreigners, you see, but you ought to have heard him last St. Patrick's day on Home Rule for Ireland. Then he was talking! That speech made him a United States senator, I guess. I don't just see how he expects to win out on this Cuba game. The Cubans haven't got no votes."

The young man opened his eyes in some bewilderment.

"He speaks for the good of Cuba, for the sake of humanity," he ventured.

"What?" inquired the fat stranger. "Oh, yes, of course. Well, I must be getting on. Good-night, sir."

The stranger moved on his way, but the young

man still lingered uncertainly in the snow-swept corridor, shivering violently with the cold and stamping his feet for greater comfort. His face was burned to a deep red, which seemed to have come from some long exposure to a tropical sun, but which held no sign of health. His cheeks were hollow and his eyes were lighted with the fire of fever, and from time to time he was shaken by violent bursts of coughing which caused him to reach toward one of the pillars for support.

As the last of the lights went out in the Garden, the speaker of the evening and three of his friends came laughing and talking down the long corridor. Senator Stanton was a conspicuous figure at any time, and even in those places where his portraits had not penetrated he was at once recognized as a personage. Something in his erect carriage and an unusual grace of movement, and the power and success in his face, made men turn to look at him. He had been told that he resembled the early portraits of Henry Clay, and he had never quite forgotten the coincidence.

The senator was wrapping the collar of his fur coat around his throat and puffing contentedly at a fresh cigar, and as he passed, the night-watchman and the ushers bowed to the great man and stood looking after him with the half-humorous, half-envious deference that the American voter

pays to the successful politician. At the sidewalk, the policemen hurried to open the door of his carriage, and in their eagerness made a double line, through which he passed nodding to them gravely. The young man who had stood so long in waiting pushed his way through the line to his side.

"Senator Stanton," he began timidly, "might I speak to you a moment? My name is Arkwright; I am just back from Cuba, and I want to thank you for your speech. I am an American, and I thank God that I am since you are too, sir. No one has said anything since the war began that compares with what you said to-night. You put it nobly, and I know, for I've been there for three years, only I can't make other people understand it, and I am thankful that someone can. You'll forgive my stopping you, sir, but I wanted to thank you. I feel it very much."

Senator Stanton's friends had already seated themselves in his carriage and were looking out of the door and smiling with mock patience. But the senator made no move to follow them. Though they were his admirers they were sometimes sceptical, and he was not sorry that they should hear this uninvited tribute. So he made a pretence of buttoning his long coat about him, and nodded encouragingly to Arkwright to continue. "I'm glad you liked it, sir," he said with

the pleasant, gracious smile that had won him a friend wherever it had won him a vote. "It is very satisfactory to know from one who is well informed on the subject that what I have said is correct. The situation there is truly terrible. You have just returned, you say? Where were you—in Havana?"

"No, in the other provinces, sir," Arkwright answered. "I have been all over the island; I am a civil engineer. The truth has not been half told about Cuba, I assure you, sir. It is massacre there, not war. It is partly so through ignorance, but nevertheless it is massacre. And what makes it worse is, that it is the massacre of the innocents. That is what I liked best of what you said in that great speech, the part about the women and children."

He reached out his hands detainingly, and then drew back as though in apology for having already kept the great man so long waiting in the cold. "I wish I could tell you some of the terrible things I have seen," he began again, eagerly, as Stanton made no movement to depart. "They are much worse than those you instanced to-night, and you could make so much better use of them than anyone else. I have seen starving women nursing dead babies, and sometimes starving babies sucking their dead mothers' breasts; I have seen men

cut down in the open roads and while digging in the fields—and two hundred women imprisoned in one room without food and eaten with smallpox, and huts burned while the people in them slept——"

The young man had been speaking impetuously, but he stopped as suddenly, for the senator was not listening to him. He had lowered his eyes and was looking with a glance of mingled fascination and disgust at Arkwright's hands. In his earnestness the young man had stretched them out, and as they showed behind the line of his ragged sleeves the others could see, even in the blurred light and falling snow, that the wrists of each hand were gashed and cut in dark-brown lines like the skin of a mulatto, and in places were a raw red, where the fresh skin had but just closed over. The young man paused and stood shivering, still holding his hands out rigidly before him.

The senator raised his eyes slowly and drew away.

"What is that?" he said in a low voice, pointing with a gloved finger at the black lines on the wrists.

A sergeant in the group of policemen who had closed around the speakers answered him promptly from his profound fund of professional knowledge.

"That's handcuffs, senator," he said importantly, and glanced at Stanton as though to signify that at a word from him he would take this suspicious character into custody. The young man pulled the frayed cuffs of his shirt over his wrists and tucked his hands, which the cold had frozen into an ashy blue, under his armpits to warm them.

"No, they don't use handcuffs in the field," he said in the same low, eager tone; "they use ropes and leather thongs; they fastened me behind a horse, and when he stumbled going down the trail it jerked me forward and the cords would tighten and tear the flesh. But they have had a long time to heal now. I have been eight months in prison."

The young men at the carriage window had ceased smiling and were listening intently. One of them stepped out and stood beside the carriage door looking down at the shivering figure before him with a close and curious scrutiny.

"Eight months in prison!" echoed the police sergeant with a note of triumph; "what did I tell you?"

"Hold your tongue!" said the young man at the carriage door. There was silence for a moment, while the men looked at the senator, as though waiting for him to speak.

"Where were you in prison, Mr. Arkwright?" he asked.

"First in the calaboose at Santa Clara for two months, and then in Cabañas. The Cubans who were taken when I was were shot by the fusillade on different days during this last month. Two of them, the Ezetas, were father and son, and the Volunteer band played all the time the execution was going on, so that the other prisoners might not hear them cry 'Cuba Libre!' when the order came to fire. But we heard them."

The senator shivered slightly and pulled his fur collar up farther around his face. "I'd like to talk with you," he said, "if you have nothing to do to-morrow. I'd like to go into this thing thoroughly. Congress must be made to take some action."

The young man clasped his hands eagerly. "Ah, Mr. Stanton, if you would," he cried, "if you would only give me an hour! I could tell you so much that you could use. And you can believe what I say, sir—it is not necessary to lie—God knows the truth is bad enough. I can give you names and dates for everything I say. Or I can do better than that, sir. I can take you there yourself—in three months I can show you all you need to see, without danger to you in any way. And they would not know me, now that I have grown a beard, and I am a skeleton to what I was. I can speak the language well, and I know

just what you should see, and then you could come back as one speaking with authority and not have to say, 'I have read,' or 'have been told,' but you can say, 'These are the things I have seen'—and you could free Cuba."

The senator coughed and put the question aside for the moment with a wave of the hand that held his cigar. "We will talk of that to-morrow also. Come to lunch with me at one. My apartments are in the Berkeley on Fifth Avenue. But aren't you afraid to go back there?" he asked curiously. "I should think you'd had enough of it. And you've got a touch of fever, haven't you?" He leaned forward and peered into the other's eyes.

"It is only the prison fever," the young man answered; "food and this cold will drive that out of me. And I must go back. There is so much to do there," he added. "Ah, if I could tell them, as you can tell them, what I feel here." He struck his chest sharply with his hand, and on the instant fell into a fit of coughing so violent that the young man at the carriage door caught him around the waist, and one of the policemen supported him from the other side.

"You need a doctor," said the senator, kindly. "I'll ask mine to have a look at you. Don't forget, then, at one o'clock to-morrow. We will go into this thing thoroughly." He shook Arkwright

warmly by the hand and, stooping, stepped into the carriage. The young man who had stood at the door followed him and crowded back luxuriously against the cushions. The footman swung himself up beside the driver, and said "Uptown Delmonico's," as he wrapped the fur rug around his legs, and with a salute from the policemen and a scraping of hoofs on the slippery asphalt the great man was gone.

"That poor fellow needs a doctor," he said as the carriage rolled up the avenue, "and he needs an overcoat, and he needs food. He needs about almost everything, by the looks of him."

But the voice of the young man in the corner of the carriage objected drowsily—

"On the contrary," he said, "it seemed to me that he had the one thing needful."

By one o'clock of the day following, Senator Stanton, having read the reports of his speech in the morning papers, punctuated with "Cheers," "Tremendous enthusiasm" and more "Cheers," was still in a willing frame of mind toward Cuba and her self-appointed envoy, young Mr. Arkwright.

Over night he had had doubts but that the young man's enthusiasm would bore him on the morrow, but Mr. Arkwright, when he appeared, developed, on the contrary, a practical turn of

mind which rendered his suggestions both flattering and feasible. He was still terribly in earnest, but he was clever enough or serious enough to see that the motives which appealed to him might not have sufficient force to move a successful statesman into action. So he placed before the senator only those arguments and reasons which he guessed were the best adapted to secure his interest and his help. His proposal as he set it forth was simplicity itself.

"Here is a map of the island," he said; "on it I have marked the places you can visit in safety, and where you will meet the people you ought to see. If you leave New York at midnight you can reach Tampa on the second day. From Tampa we cross in another day to Havana. There you can visit the Americans imprisoned in Morro and Cabañas, and in the streets you can see the starving pacificos. From Havana I shall take you by rail to Jucaro, Matanzas, Santa Clara and Cienfuegos. You will not be able to see the insurgents in the fields—it is not necessary that you should—but you can visit one of the sugar plantations and some of the insurgent chiefs will run the forts by night and come in to talk with you. I will show you burning fields and houses, and starving men and women by the thousands, and men and women dying of fevers. You can see Cuban prisoners

shot by a firing squad and you can note how these rebels meet death. You can see all this in three weeks and be back in New York in a month, as anyone can see it who wishes to learn the truth. Why, English members of Parliament go all the way to India and British Columbia to inform themselves about those countries, they travel thousands of miles, but only one member of either of our houses of Congress has taken the trouble to cross these eighty miles of water that lie between us and Cuba. You can either go quietly and incognito, as it were, or you can advertise the fact of your going, which would be better. And from the moment you start the interest in your visit will grow and increase until there will be no topic discussed in any of our papers except yourself, and what you are doing and what you mean to do.

"By the time you return the people will be waiting, ready and eager to hear whatever you may have to say. Your word will be the last word for them. It is not as though you were some demagogue seeking notoriety, or a hotel piazza correspondent at Key West or Jacksonville. You are the only statesman we have, the only orator Americans will listen to, and I tell you that when you come before them and bring home to them as only you can the horrors of this war, you will be the only man in this country. You will be the Patrick

Henry of Cuba; you can go down to history as the man who added the most beautiful island in the seas to the territory of the United States, who saved thousands of innocent children and women, and who dared to do what no other politician has dared to do—to go and see for himself and to come back and speak the truth. It only means a month out of your life, a month's trouble and discomfort, but with no risk. What is a month out of a lifetime, when that month means immortality to you and life to thousands? In a month you would make a half dozen after-dinner speeches and cause your friends to laugh and applaud. Why not wring their hearts instead, and hold this thing up before them as it is, and shake it in their faces? Show it to them in all its horror—bleeding, diseased and naked, an offence to our humanity, and to our prated love of liberty, and to our God."

The young man threw himself eagerly forward and beat the map with his open palm. But the senator sat apparently unmoved, gazing thoughtfully into the open fire, and shook his head.

While the luncheon was in progress the young gentleman who the night before had left the carriage and stood at Arkwright's side had entered the room and was listening intently. He had invited himself to some fresh coffee, and had then relapsed into an attentive silence, following what

the others said with an amused and interested countenance. Stanton had introduced him as Mr. Livingstone, and appeared to take it for granted that Arkwright would know who he was. He seemed to regard him with a certain deference which Arkwright judged was due to some fixed position the young man held, either of social or of political value.

"I do not know," said Stanton with consideration, "that I am prepared to advocate the annexation of the island. It is a serious problem."

"I am not urging that," Arkwright interrupted anxiously; "the Cubans themselves do not agree as to that, and in any event it is an afterthought. Our object now should be to prevent further bloodshed. If you see a man beating a boy to death, you first save the boy's life and decide afterward where he is to go to school. If there were anyone else, senator," Arkwright continued earnestly, "I would not trouble you. But we all know your strength in this country. You are independent and fearless, and men of both parties listen to you. Surely, God has given you this great gift of oratory (if you will forgive my speaking so) to use only in a great cause. A grand organ in a cathedral is placed there to lift men's thoughts to high resolves and purposes, not to make people dance. A street organ can do that. Now, here is a cause

worthy of your great talents, worthy of a Daniel Webster, of a Henry Clay."

The senator frowned at the fire and shook his head doubtfully.

"If they knew what I was down there for," he asked, "wouldn't they put me in prison too?"

Arkwright laughed incredulously.

"Certainly not," he said; "you would go there as a private citizen, as a tourist to look on and observe. Spain is not seeking complications of that sort. She has troubles enough without imprisoning United States senators."

"Yes; but these fevers now," persisted Stanton, "they're no respecter of persons, I imagine. A United States senator is not above small-pox or cholera."

Arkwright shook his head impatiently and sighed.

"It is difficult to make it clear to one who has not been there," he said. "These people and soldiers are dying of fever because they are forced to live like pigs, and they are already sick with starvation. A healthy man like yourself would be in no more danger than you would be in walking through the wards of a New York hospital."

Senator Stanton turned in his arm-chair, and held up his hand impressively.

"If I were to tell them the things you have

told me," he said warningly; "if I were to say I have seen such things—American property in flames, American interests ruined, and that five times as many women and children have died of fever and starvation in three months in Cuba as the Sultan has massacred in Armenia in three years—it would mean war with Spain."

"Well?" said Arkwright.

Stanton shrugged his shoulders and sank back again in his chair.

"It would either mean war," Arkwright went on, "or it might mean the sending of the Red Cross army to Cuba. It went to Constantinople, five thousand miles away, to help the Armenian Christians—why has it waited three years to go eighty miles to feed and clothe the Cuban women and children? It is like sending help to a hungry peasant in Russia while a man dies on your door-step."

"Well, said the senator, rising, "I will let you know to-morrow. If it is the right thing to do, and if I can do it, of course it must be done. We start from Tampa, you say? I know the presidents of all of those roads and they'll probably give me a private car for the trip down. Shall we take any newspaper men with us, or shall I wait until I get back and be interviewed? What do you think?"

"I would wait until my return," Arkwright answered, his eyes glowing with the hope the senator's words had inspired, "and then speak to a mass-meeting here and in Boston and in Chicago. Three speeches will be enough. Before you have finished your last one the American warships will be in the harbor of Havana."

"Ah, youth, youth!" said the senator, smiling gravely, "it is no light responsibility to urge a country into war."

"It is no light responsibility," Arkwright answered, "to know you have the chance to save the lives of thousands of little children and helpless women and to let the chance pass."

"Quite so, that is quite true," said the senator. "Well, good-morning. I shall let you know to-morrow."

Young Livingstone went down in the elevator with Arkwright, and when they had reached the sidewalk stood regarding him for a moment in silence.

"You mustn't count too much on Stanton, you know," he said kindly; "he has a way of disappointing people."

"Ah, he can never disappoint me," Arkwright answered confidently, "no matter how much I expected. Besides, I have already heard him speak."

"I don't mean that; I don't mean he is disappointing as a speaker. Stanton is a great orator, I think. Most of those Southerners are, and he's the only real orator I ever heard. But what I mean is, that he doesn't go into things impulsively; he first considers himself, and then he considers every other side of the question before he commits himself to it. Before he launches out on a popular wave he tries to find out where it is going to land him. He likes the sort of popular wave that carries him along with it where everyone can see him; he doesn't fancy being hurled up on the beach with his mouth full of sand."

"You are saying that he is selfish, self-seeking?" Arkwright demanded, with a challenge in his voice. "I thought you were his friend."

"Yes, he is selfish, and yes, I am his friend," the young man answered, smiling; "at least, he seems willing to be mine. I am saying nothing against him that I have not said to him. If you'll come back with me up the elevator I'll tell him he's a self-seeker and selfish, and with no thought above his own interests. He won't mind. He'd say I cannot comprehend his motives. Why, you've only to look at his record. When the Venezuelan message came out he attacked the President and declared he was trying to make political capital and to drag us into war, and that

what we wanted was arbitration; but when the President brought out the Arbitration Treaty he attacked that too in the Senate and destroyed it. Why? Not because he had convictions, but because the President had refused a foreign appointment to a friend of his in the South. He has been a free-silver man for the last ten years, he comes from a free-silver state, and the members of the legislature that elected him were all for silver, but this last election his Wall Street friends got hold of him and worked on his feelings, and he repudiated his party, his state, and his constituents, and came out for gold."

"Well, but surely," Arkwright objected, "that took courage? To own that for ten years you had been wrong, and to come out for the right at the last."

Livingstone stared and shrugged his shoulders. "It's all a question of motives," he said indifferently. "I don't want to shatter your idol; I only want to save you from counting too much on him."

When Arkwright called on the morrow Senator Stanton was not at home, and the day following he was busy, and could give him only a brief interview. There were previous engagements and other difficulties in the way of his going which he had not foreseen, he said, and he feared he should

have to postpone his visit to Cuba indefinitely. He asked if Mr. Arkwright would be so kind as to call again within a week; he would then be better able to give him a definite answer.

Arkwright left the apartment with a sensation of such keen disappointment that it turned him ill and dizzy. He felt that the great purpose of his life was being played with and put aside. But he had not selfish resentment on his own account; he was only the more determined to persevere. He considered new arguments and framed new appeals; and one moment blamed himself bitterly for having foolishly discouraged the statesman by too vivid pictures of the horrors he might encounter, and the next, questioned if he had not been too practical and so failed because he had not made the terrible need of immediate help his sole argument. Every hour wasted in delay meant, as he knew, the sacrifice of many lives, and there were other, more sordid and more practical, reasons for speedy action. For his supply of money was running low and there was now barely enough remaining to carry him through the month of travel he had planned to take at Stanton's side. What would happen to him when that momentous trip was over was of no consequence. He would have done the work as far as his small share in it lay, he would have set in motion a great power

that was to move Congress and the people of the United States to action. If he could but do that, what became of him counted for nothing.

But at the end of the week his fears and misgivings were scattered gloriously, and a single line from the senator set his heart leaping and brought him to his knees in gratitude and thanksgiving. On returning one afternoon to the mean lodging into which he had moved to save his money, he found a telegram from Stanton, and he tore it open trembling between hope and fear.

"Have arranged to leave for Tampa with you Monday, at midnight," it read. "Call for me at ten o'clock same evening.—STANTON."

Arkwright read the message three times. There was a heavy, suffocating pressure at his heart as though it had ceased beating. He sank back limply upon the edge of his bed and, clutching the piece of paper in his two hands, spoke the words aloud triumphantly as though to assure himself that they were true. Then a flood of unspeakable relief, of happiness and gratitude, swept over him, and he turned and slipped to the floor, burying his face in the pillow, and wept out his thanks upon his knees.

A man so deeply immersed in public affairs as

was Stanton, and with such a multiplicity of personal interests, could not prepare to absent himself for a month without his intention becoming known, and on the day when he was to start for Tampa the morning newspapers proclaimed the fact that he was about to visit Cuba. They gave to his mission all the importance and display that Arkwright had foretold. Some of the newspapers stated that he was going as a special commissioner of the President to study and report; others that he was acting in behalf of the Cuban legation in Washington and had plenipotentiary powers. Opposition organs suggested that he was acting in the interests of the sugar trust, and his own particular organ declared that it was his intention to free Cuba at the risk of his own freedom, safety, and even life.

The Spanish minister in Washington sent a cable for publication to Madrid, stating that a distinguished American statesman was about to visit Cuba, to investigate, and, later, to deny the truth of the disgraceful libels published concerning the Spanish officials on the island by the papers of the United States. At the same time he cabled in cipher to the captain-general in Havana to see that the distinguished statesman was closely spied upon from the moment of his arrival until his departure, and to place on the "suspect" list all

Americans and Cubans who ventured to give him any information.

The afternoon papers enlarged on the importance of the visit and on the good that would surely come of it. They told that Senator Stanton had refused to be interviewed or to disclose the object of his journey. But it was enough, they said, that someone in authority was at last to seek out the truth, and added that no one would be listened to with greater respect than would the Southern senator. On this all the editorial writers were agreed. The day passed drearily for Arkwright. Early in the morning he packed his valise and paid his landlord, and for the remainder of the day walked the streets or sat in the hotel corridor waiting impatiently for each fresh edition of the papers. In them he read the signs of the great upheaval of popular feeling that was to restore peace and health and plenty to the island for which he had given his last three years of energy and life.

He was trembling with excitement, as well as with the cold, when at ten o'clock precisely he stood at Senator Stanton's door. He had forgotten to eat his dinner, and the warmth of the dimly lit hall and the odor of rich food which was wafted from an inner room touched his senses with tantalizing comfort.

"The senator says you are to come this way, sir," the servant directed. He took Arkwright's valise from his hand and parted the heavy curtains that hid the dining-room, and Arkwright stepped in between them and then stopped in some embarrassment. He found himself in the presence of a number of gentlemen seated at a long dinner-table, who turned their heads as he entered and peered at him through the smoke that floated in light layers above the white cloth. The dinner had been served, but the senator's guests still sat with their chairs pushed back from a table lighted by candles under yellow shades, and covered with beautiful flowers and with bottles of varied sizes in stands of quaint and intricate design. Senator Stanton's tall figure showed dimly through the smoke, and his deep voice hailed Arkwright cheerily from the farther end of the room. "This way, Mr. Arkwright," he said. "I have a chair waiting for you here." He grasped Arkwright's hand warmly and pulled him into the vacant place at his side. An elderly gentleman on Arkwright's other side moved to make more room for him and shoved a liqueur glass toward him with a friendly nod and pointed at an open box of cigars. He was a fine-looking man, and Arkwright noticed that he was regarding him with a glance of the keenest interest. All of those

at the table were men of twice Arkwright's age, except Livingstone, whom he recognized and who nodded to him pleasantly and at the same time gave an order to a servant, pointing at Arkwright as he did so. Some of the gentlemen wore their business suits, and one opposite Arkwright was still in his overcoat, and held his hat in his hand. These latter seemed to have arrived after the dinner had begun, for they formed a second line back of those who had places at the table; they all seemed to know one another and were talking with much vivacity and interest.

Stanton did not attempt to introduce Arkwright to his guests individually, but said: "Gentlemen, this is Mr. Arkwright, of whom I have been telling you, the young gentleman who has done such magnificent work for the cause of Cuba." Those who caught Arkwright's eye nodded to him, and others raised their glasses at him, but with a smile that he could not understand. It was as though they all knew something concerning him of which he was ignorant. He noted that the faces of some were strangely familiar, and he decided that he must have seen their portraits in the public prints. After he had introduced Arkwright, the senator drew his chair slightly away from him and turned in what seemed embarrassment to the man on his other side. The elderly gentleman next to Ark-

wright filled his glass, a servant placed a small cup of coffee at his elbow, and he lit a cigar and looked about him.

"You must find this weather very trying after the tropics," his neighbor said.

Arkwright assented cordially. The brandy was flowing through his veins and warming him; he forgot that he was hungry, and the kind, interested glances of those about him set him at his ease. It was a propitious start, he thought, a pleasant leave-taking for the senator and himself, full of good-will and good wishes.

He turned toward Stanton and waited until he had ceased speaking.

"The papers have begun well, haven't they?" he asked, eagerly.

He had spoken in a low voice, almost in a whisper, but those about the table seemed to have heard him, for there was silence instantly, and when he glanced up he saw the eyes of all turned upon him and he noticed on their faces the same smile he had seen there when he entered.

"Yes," Stanton answered constrainedly. "Yes, I—" he lowered his voice, but the silence still continued. Stanton had his eyes fixed on the table, but now he frowned and half rose from his chair.

"I want to speak with you, Arkwright," he said. "Suppose we go into the next room. I'll

be back in a moment," he added, nodding to the others.

But the man on his right removed his cigar from his lips and said in an undertone, "No, sit down, stay where you are"; and the elderly gentleman at Arkwright's side laid his hand detainingly on his arm. "Oh, you won't take Mr. Arkwright away from us, Stanton?" he asked, smiling.

Stanton shrugged his shoulders and sat down again, and there was a moment's pause. It was broken by the man in the overcoat, who laughed.

"He's paying you a compliment, Mr. Arkwright," he said. He pointed with his cigar to the gentleman at Arkwright's side.

"I don't understand," Arkwright answered, doubtfully.

"It's a compliment to your eloquence—he's afraid to leave you alone with the senator. Livingstone's been telling us that you are a better talker than Stanton." Arkwright turned a troubled countenance toward the men about the table, and then toward Livingstone, but that young man had his eyes fixed gravely on the glasses before him and did not raise them.

Arkwright felt a sudden, unreasonable fear of the circle of strong-featured, serene, and confident men about him. They seemed to be making him

the subject of a jest, to be enjoying something among themselves of which he was in ignorance, but which concerned him closely. He turned a white face toward Stanton.

"You don't mean," he began piteously, "that —that you are not going? Is that it—tell me—is that what you wanted to say?"

Stanton shifted in his chair and muttered some words between his lips, then turned toward Arkwright and spoke quite clearly and distinctly.

"I am very sorry, Mr. Arkwright," he said, "but I am afraid I'll have to disappoint you. Reasons I cannot now explain have arisen which make my going impossible—quite impossible," he added firmly—"not only now, but later," he went on quickly, as Arkwright was about to interrupt him.

Arkwright made no second attempt to speak. He felt the muscles of his face working and the tears coming to his eyes, and to hide his weakness he twisted in his chair and sat staring ahead of him with his back turned to the table. He heard Livingstone's voice break the silence with some hurried question, and immediately his embarrassment was hidden in a murmur of answers and the moving of glasses as the men shifted in their chairs and the laughter and talk went on as briskly as before. Arkwright saw a sideboard before

him and a servant arranging some silver on one of the shelves. He watched the man do this with a concentrated interest as though the dull, numbed feeling in his brain caught at the trifle in order to put off, as long as possible, the consideration of the truth.

And then beyond the sideboard and the tapestry on the wall above it, he saw the sun shining down upon the island of Cuba, he saw the royal palms waving and bending, the dusty columns of Spanish infantry crawling along the white roads and leaving blazing huts and smoking cane-fields in their wake; he saw skeletons of men and women seeking for food among the refuse of the street; he heard the order given to the firing squad, the splash of the bullets as they scattered the plaster on the prison wall, and he saw a kneeling figure pitch forward on its face, with a useless bandage tied across its sightless eyes.

Senator Stanton brought him back with a sharp shake of the shoulder. He had also turned his back on the others, and was leaning forward with his elbows on his knees. He spoke rapidly, and in a voice only slightly raised above a whisper.

"I am more than sorry, Arkwright," he said earnestly. "You mustn't blame me altogether. I have had a hard time of it this afternoon. I wanted to go. I really wanted to go. The thing ap-

pealed to me, it touched me, it seemed as if I owed it to myself to do it. But they were too many for me," he added with a backward toss of his head toward the men around his table. "If the papers had not told on me I could have got well away," he went on in an eager tone, "but as soon as they read of it, they came here straight from their offices. You know who they are, don't you?" he asked, and even in his earnestness there was an added touch of importance in his tone as he spoke the name of his party's leader, of men who stood prominently in Wall Street and who were at the head of great trusts.

"You see how it is," he said with a shrug of his shoulders. "They have enormous interests at stake. They said I would drag them into war, that I would disturb values, that the business interests of the country would suffer. I'm under obligations to most of them, they have advised me in financial matters, and they threatened—they threatened to make it unpleasant for me." His voice hardened and he drew in his breath quickly, and laughed. "You wouldn't understand if I were to tell you. It's rather involved. And after all, they may be right, agitation may be bad for the country. And your party leader after all is your party leader, isn't he, and if he says 'no' what are you to do? My sympathies are just as keen for

these poor women and children as ever, but as these men say, 'charity begins at home,' and we mustn't do anything to bring on war prices again, or to send stocks tumbling about our heads, must we?" He leaned back in his chair again and sighed. "Sympathy is an expensive luxury, I find," he added.

Arkwright rose stiffly and pushed Stanton away from him with his hand. He moved like a man coming out of a dream.

"Don't talk to me like that," he said in a low voice. The noise about the table ended on the instant, but Arkwright did not notice that it had ceased. "You know I don't understand that," he went on; "what does it matter to me?" He put his hand up to the side of his face and held it there, looking down at Stanton. He had the dull, heavy look in his eyes of a man who has just come through an operation under some heavy drug. "'Wall Street,' 'trusts,' 'party leaders,'" he repeated, "what are they to me? The words don't reach me, they have lost their meaning, it is a language I have forgotten, thank God!" he added. He turned and moved his eyes around the table, scanning the faces of the men before him.

"Yes, you are twelve to one," he said at last, still speaking dully and in a low voice, as though he were talking to himself. "You have won a

noble victory, gentlemen. I congratulate you. But I do not blame you, we are all selfish and self-seeking. I thought I was working only for Cuba, but I was working for myself, just as you are. I wanted to feel that it was I who had helped to bring relief to that plague-spot, that it was through my efforts the help had come. Yes, if he had done as I asked, I suppose I would have taken the credit."

He swayed slightly, and to steady himself caught at the back of his chair. But at the same moment his eyes glowed fiercely and he held himself erect again. He pointed with his finger at the circle of great men who sat looking up at him in curious silence.

"You are like a ring of gamblers around a gaming table," he cried wildly, "who see nothing but the green cloth and the wheel and the piles of money before them, who forget, in watching the money rise and fall, that outside the sun is shining, that human beings are sick and suffering, that men are giving their lives for an idea, for a sentiment, for a flag. You are the money-changers in the temple of this great republic; and the day will come, I pray to God, when you will be scourged and driven out with whips. Do you think you can form combines and deals that will cheat you into heaven? Can your 'trusts' save

You are like a ring of gamblers around a gaming table.

your souls—is 'Wall Street' the strait and narrow road to salvation?"

The men about the table leaned back and stared at Arkwright in as great amazement as though he had violently attempted an assault upon their pockets, or had suddenly gone mad in their presence. Some of them frowned, and others appeared not to have heard, and others smiled grimly and waited for him to continue as though they were spectators at a play.

The political leader broke the silence with a low aside to Stanton. "Does the gentleman belong to the Salvation Army?" he asked.

Arkwright whirled about and turned upon him fiercely.

"Old gods give way to new gods," he cried. "Here is your brother. I am speaking for him. Do you ever think of him? How dare you sneer at me?" he cried. "You can crack your whip over that man's head and turn him from what in his heart and conscience he knows is right; you can crack your whip over the men who call themselves free-born American citizens and who have made you their boss—sneer at them if you like, but you have no collar on my neck. If you are a leader, why don't you lead your people to what is good and noble? Why do you stop this man in the work God sent him here to do? You would

make a party hack of him, a political prostitute, something lower than the woman who walks the streets. She sells her body—this man is selling his soul."

He turned, trembling and quivering, and shook his finger above the upturned face of the senator.

"What have you done with your talents, Stanton?" he cried. "What have you done with your talents?"

The man in the overcoat struck the table before him with his fist so that the glasses rang.

"By God," he laughed, "I call him a better speaker than Stanton! Livingstone's right, he *is* better than Stanton—but he lacks Stanton's knack of making himself popular," he added. He looked around the table inviting approbation with a smile, but no one noticed him, nor spoke to break the silence.

Arkwright heard the words dully and felt that he was being mocked. He covered his face with his hands and stood breathing brokenly; his body was still trembling with an excitement he could not master.

Stanton rose from his chair and shook him by the shoulder. "Are you mad, Arkwright?" he cried. "You have no right to insult my guests or me. Be calm—control yourself."

"What does it matter what I say?" Arkwright

went on desperately. "I am mad. Yes, that is it, I am mad. They have won and I have lost, and it drove me beside myself. I counted on you. I knew that no one else could let my people go. But I'll not trouble you again. I wish you good-night, sir, and good-by. If I have been unjust, you must forget it."

He turned sharply, but Stanton placed a detaining hand on his shoulder. "Wait," he commanded querulously; "where are you going? Will you, still——?"

Arkwright bowed his head. "Yes," he answered. "I have but just time now to catch our train—my train, I mean."

He looked up at Stanton, and taking his hand in both of his, drew the man toward him. All the wildness and intolerance in his manner had passed, and as he raised his eyes they were full of a firm resolve.

"Come," he said, simply; "there is yet time. Leave these people behind you. What can you answer when they ask what have you done with your talents?"

"Good God, Arkwright," the senator exclaimed, angrily, pulling his hand away; "don't talk like a hymn-book, and don't make another scene. What you ask is impossible. Tell me what I can do to help you in any other way, and——"

"Come," repeated the young man, firmly. "The world may judge you by what you do to-night."

Stanton looked at the boy for a brief moment with a strained and eager scrutiny, and then turned away abruptly and shook his head in silence, and Arkwright passed around the table and on out of the room.

A month later, as the Southern senator was passing through the reading-room of the Union Club, Livingstone beckoned to him, and handing him an afternoon paper pointed at a paragraph in silence. The paragraph was dated Sagua la Grande, and read:

"The body of Henry Arkwright, an American civil engineer, was brought into Sagua to-day by a Spanish column. It was found lying in a road three miles beyond the line of forts. Arkwright was surprised by a guerilla force while attempting to make his way to the insurgent camp, and on resisting was shot. The body has been handed over to the American consul for interment. It is badly mutilated."

Stanton lowered the paper and stood staring out of the window at the falling snow and the cheery lights and bustling energy of the avenue.

"Poor fellow," he said, "he wanted so much

to help them. And he didn't accomplish anything, did he?"

Livingstone stared at the older man and laughed shortly.

"Well, I don't know," he said. "He died. Some of us only live."

THE VAGRANT

The Vagrant

HIS Excellency Sir Charles Greville, K. C. M. G., Governor of the Windless Islands, stood upon the veranda of Government House surveying the new day with critical and searching eyes. Sir Charles had been so long absolute monarch of the Windless Isles that he had assumed unconsciously a mental attitude of suzerainty over even the glittering waters of the Caribbean Sea, and the coral reefs under the waters, and the rainbow skies that floated above them. But on this particular morning not even the critical eye of the Governor could distinguish a single flaw in the tropical landscape before him.

The lawn at his feet ran down to meet the dazzling waters of the bay, the blue waters of the bay ran to meet a great stretch of absinthe green, the green joined a fairy sky of pink and gold and saffron. Islands of coral floated on the sea of absinthe, and derelict clouds of mother-of-pearl swung low above them, starting from nowhere and going nowhere, but drifting beautifully, like giant soap-bubbles of light and color. Where the

lawn touched the waters of the bay the cocoanut-palms reached their crooked lengths far up into the sunshine, and as the sea-breeze stirred their fronds they filled the hot air with whispers and murmurs like the fluttering of many fans. Nature smiled boldly upon the Governor, confident in her bountiful beauty, as though she said, "Surely you cannot but be pleased with me to-day." And, as though in answer, the critical and searching glance of Sir Charles relaxed.

The crunching of the gravel and the rattle of the sentry's musket at salute recalled him to his high office and to the duties of the morning. He waved his hand, and, as though it were a wand, the sentry moved again, making his way to the kitchen-garden, and so around Government House and back to the lawn-tennis court, maintaining in his solitary pilgrimage the dignity of her Majesty's representative, as well as her Majesty's power over the Windless Isles.

The Governor smiled slightly, with the ease of mind of one who finds all things good. Supreme authority, surroundings of endless beauty, the respectful, even humble, deference of his inferiors, and never even an occasional visit from a superior, had in four years lowered him into a bed of ease and self-satisfaction. He was cut off from the world, and yet of it. Each month there came,

viâ Jamaica, the three weeks' old copy of *The Weekly Times;* he subscribed to Mudie's Colonial Library; and from the States he had imported an American lawn-mower, the mechanism of which no one as yet understood. Within his own borders he had created a healthy, orderly seaport out of what had been a sink of fever and a refuge for all the ne'er-do-wells and fugitive revolutionists of Central America.

He knew, as he sat each evening on his veranda, looking across the bay, that in the world beyond the pink and gold sunset men were still panting, struggling, and starving; crises were rising and passing; strikes and panics, wars and the rumors of wars, swept from continent to continent; a plague crept through India; a filibuster with five hundred men at his back crossed an imaginary line and stirred the world from Cape Town to London; Emperors were crowned; the good Queen celebrated the longest reign; and a captain of artillery imprisoned in a swampy island in the South Atlantic caused two hemispheres to clamor for his rescue, and lit a race war that stretched from Algiers to the boulevards.

And yet, at the Windless Isles, all these happenings seemed to Sir Charles like the morning's memory of a dream. For these things never crossed the ring of the coral reefs; he saw them

only as pictures in an illustrated paper a month old. And he was pleased to find that this was so. He was sufficient to himself, with his own responsibilities and social duties and public works. He was a man in authority, who said to others, "Come!" and "Go!" Under him were commissioners, and under the commissioners district inspectors and boards of education and of highways. For the better health of the colony he had planted trees that sucked the malaria from the air; for its better morals he had substituted as a Sunday amusement cricket-matches for cock-fights; and to keep it at peace he had created a local constabulary of native negroes, and had dressed them in the cast-off uniforms of London policemen. His handiwork was everywhere, and his interest was all sunk in his handiwork. The days passed gorgeous with sunshine, the nights breathed with beauty. It was an existence of leisurely occupation, and one that promised no change, and he was content.

As it was Thursday, the Council met that morning, and some questions of moment to the colony were to be brought up for consideration. The question of the dog-tax was one which perplexed Sir Charles most particularly. The two Councillors elected by the people and the three appointed by the crown had disagreed as to this tax. Of

the five hundred British subjects at the seaport, all but ten were owners of dogs, and it had occurred to Sassoon, the chemist, that a tax of half-a-crown a year on each of these dogs would meet the expense of extending the oyster-shell road to the new cricket-grounds. To this Snellgrove, who held the contract for the narrow-gauge railroad, agreed; but the three crown Councillors opposed the tax vigorously, on the ground that as scavengers alone the dogs were a boon to the colony and should be encouraged. The fact that each of these gentlemen owned not only one but several dogs of high pedigree made their position one of great delicacy.

There was no way by which the Governor could test the popular will in the matter, except through his secretary, Mr. Clarges, who, at the cricket-match between the local eleven and the officers and crew of H. M. S. *Partridge,* had been informed by the other owners of several fox-terriers that, in their opinion, the tax was a piece of "condemned tommy-rot." From this the Governor judged that it would not prove a popular measure. As he paced the veranda, drawing deliberately on his cigar, and considering to which party he should give the weight of his final support, his thoughts were disturbed by the approach of a stranger, who advanced along the gravel walk,

guarded on either side by one of the local constabulary. The stranger was young and of poor appearance. His bare feet were bound in a pair of the rope sandals worn by the natives, his clothing was of torn and soiled drill, and he fanned his face nonchalantly with a sombrero of battered and shapeless felt.

Sir Charles halted in his walk, and, holding his cigar behind his back, addressed himself to the sergeant.

"A vagrant?" he asked.

The words seemed to bear some amusing significance to the stranger, for his face lit instantly with a sweet and charming smile, and while he turned to hear the sergeant's reply, he regarded him with a kindly and affectionate interest.

"Yes, your Excellency."

The Governor turned to the prisoner.

"Do you know the law of this colony regarding vagrants?"

"I do not," the young man answered. His tone was politely curious, and suggested that he would like to be further informed as to the local peculiarities of a foreign country.

"After two weeks' residence," the Governor recited, impressively, "all able-bodied persons who will not work are put to work or deported. Have you made any effort to find work?"

Again the young man smiled charmingly. He shook his head and laughed. "Oh dear no," he said.

The laugh struck the Governor as impertinent.

"Then you must leave by the next mail-steamer, if you have any money to pay your passage, or, if you have no money, you must go to work on the roads. Have you any money?"

"If I had, I wouldn't—be a vagrant," the young man answered. His voice was low and singularly sweet. It seemed to suit the indolence of his attitude and the lazy, inconsequent smile. "I called on our consular agent here," he continued, leisurely, "to write a letter home for money, but he was disgracefully drunk, so I used his official note-paper to write to the State Department about him instead."

The Governor's deepest interest was aroused. The American consular agent was one of the severest trials he was forced to endure.

"You are not a British subject, then? Ah, I see—and—er—your representative was unable to assist you?"

"He was drunk," the young man repeated, placidly. "He has been drunk ever since I have been here, particularly in the mornings." He halted, as though the subject had lost interest for him,

and gazed pleasantly at the sunny bay and up at the moving palms.

"Then," said the Governor, as though he had not been interrupted, "as you have no means of support, you will help support the colony until you can earn money to leave it. That will do, sergeant."

The young man placed his hat upon his head and turned to move away, but at the first step he swayed suddenly and caught at the negro's shoulder, clasping his other hand across his eyes. The sergeant held him by the waist, and looked up at the Governor with some embarrassment.

"The young gentleman has not been well, Sir Charles," he said, apologetically.

The stranger straightened himself up and smiled vaguely. "I'm all right," he murmured. "Sun's too hot."

"Sit down," said the Governor.

He observed the stranger more closely. He noticed now that beneath the tan his face was delicate and finely cut, and that his yellow hair clung closely to a well-formed head.

"He seems faint. Has he had anything to eat?" asked the Governor.

The sergeant grinned guiltily. "Yes, Sir Charles; we've been feeding him at the barracks. It's fever, sir."

Sir Charles was not unacquainted with fallen gentlemen, "beach-combers," "remittance men," and vagrants who had known better days, and there had been something winning in this vagrant's smile, and, moreover, he had reported that thorn in his flesh, the consular agent, to the proper authorities.

He conceived an interest in a young man who, though with naked feet, did not hesitate to correspond with his Minister of Foreign Affairs.

"How long have you been ill?" he asked.

The young man looked up from where he had sunk on the steps, and roused himself with a shrug. "It doesn't matter," he said. "I've had a touch of Chagres ever since I was on the Isthmus. I was at work there on the railroad."

"Did you come here from Colon?"

"No; I worked up the Pacific side. I was clerking with Rossner Brothers at Amapala for a while, because I speak a little German, and then I footed it over to Puerto Cortez and got a job with the lottery people. They gave me twenty dollars a month gold for rolling the tickets, and I put it all in the drawing, and won as much as ten." He laughed, and, sitting erect, drew from his pocket a roll of thin green papers. "These are for the next drawing," he said. "Have some?" he added. He held them toward the negro sergeant, who,

under the eye of the Governor, resisted, and then spread the tickets on his knee like a hand at cards. "I stand to win a lot with these," he said, with a cheerful sigh. "You see, until the list's published I'm prospectively worth twenty thousand dollars. And," he added, "I break stones in the sun." He rose unsteadily, and saluted the Governor with a nod. "Good-morning, sir," he said, "and thank you."

"Wait," Sir Charles commanded. A new form of punishment had suggested itself, in which justice was tempered with mercy. "Can you work one of your American lawn-mowers?" he asked.

The young man laughed delightedly. "I never tried," he said, "but I've seen it done."

"If you've been ill, it would be murder to put you on the shell road." The Governor's dignity relaxed into a smile. "I don't desire international complications," he said. "Sergeant, take this—him—to the kitchen, and tell Corporal Mallon to give him that American lawn-mowing machine. Possibly he may understand its mechanism. Mallon only cuts holes in the turf with it." And he waved his hand in dismissal, and as the three men moved away he buried himself again in the perplexities of the dog-tax.

Ten minutes later the deliberations of the Council were disturbed by a loud and persistent rattle,

like the whir of a Maxim gun, which proved, on investigation, to arise from the American lawn-mower. The vagrant was propelling it triumphantly across the lawn, and gazing down at it with the same fond pride with which a nursemaid leans over the perambulator to observe her lusty and gurgling charge.

The Councillors had departed, Sir Charles was thinking of breakfast, the Maxim-like lawn-mower still irritated the silent hush of mid-day, when from the waters of the inner harbor there came suddenly the sharp report of a saluting gun and the rush of falling anchor-chains. There was still a week to pass before the mail-steamer should arrive, and H. M. S. *Partridge* had departed for Nassau. Besides these ships, no other vessel had skirted the buoys of the bay in eight long smiling months. Mr. Clarges, the secretary, with an effort to appear calm, and the orderly, suffocated with the news, entered through separate doors at the same instant.

The secretary filed his report first. "A yacht's just anchored in the bay, Sir Charles," he said.

The orderly's face fell. He looked aggrieved. "An American yacht," he corrected.

"And much larger than the *Partridge*," continued the secretary.

The orderly took a hasty glance back over his shoulder. "She has her launch lowered already, sir," he said.

Outside the whir of the lawn-mower continued undisturbed. Sir Charles reached for his marine-glass, and the three men hurried to the veranda.

"It looks like a man-of-war," said Sir Charles. "No," he added, adjusting the binocular; "she's a yacht. She flies the New York Yacht Club pennant—now she's showing the owner's absent pennant. He must have left in the launch. He's coming ashore now."

"He seems in a bit of a hurry," growled Mr. Clarges.

"Those Americans always—" murmured Sir Charles from behind the binocular. He did not quite know that he enjoyed this sudden onslaught upon the privacy of his harbor and port.

It was in itself annoying, and he was further annoyed to find that it could in the least degree disturb his poise.

The launch was growing instantly larger, like an express train approaching a station at full speed; her flags flew out as flat as pieces of painted tin; her bits of brass-work flashed like fire. Already the ends of the wharves were white with groups of natives.

"You might think he was going to ram the town," suggested the secretary.

"Oh, I say," he exclaimed, in remonstrance, "he's making in for your private wharf."

The Governor was rearranging the focus of the glass with nervous fingers. "I believe," he said, "no—yes—upon my word, there are—there are ladies in that launch!"

"Ladies, sir!" The secretary threw a hasty glance at the binocular, but it was in immediate use.

The clatter of the lawn-mower ceased suddenly, and the relief of its silence caused the Governor to lower his eyes. He saw the lawn-mower lying prostrate on the grass. The vagrant had vanished.

There was a sharp tinkle of bells, and the launch slipped up to the wharf and halted as softly as a bicycle. A man in a yachting-suit jumped from her, and making some laughing speech to the two women in the stern, walked briskly across the lawn, taking a letter from his pocket as he came. Sir Charles awaited him gravely; the occupants of the launch had seen him, and it was too late to retreat.

"Sir Charles Greville, I believe," said the yachtsman. He bowed, and ran lightly up the steps. "I am Mr. Robert Collier, from New York," he

said. "I have a letter to you from your ambassador at Washington. If you'll pardon me, I'll present it in person. I had meant to leave it, but seeing you—" He paused, and gave the letter in his hand to Sir Charles, who waved him toward his library.

Sir Charles scowled at the letter through his monocle, and then shook hands with his visitor. "I am very glad to see you, Mr. Collier," he said. "He says here you are preparing a book on our colonies in the West Indies." He tapped the letter with his monocle. "I am sure I shall be most happy to assist you with any information in my power."

"Well, I am writing a book—yes," Mr. Collier observed, doubtfully, "but it's a log-book. This trip I am on pleasure bent, and I also wish to consult with you on a personal matter. However, that can wait." He glanced out of the windows to where the launch lay in the sun. "My wife came ashore with me, Sir Charles," he said, "so that in case there was a Lady Greville, Mrs. Collier could call on her, and we could ask if you would waive etiquette and do us the honor to dine with us to-night on the yacht—that is, if you are not engaged."

Sir Charles smiled. "There is no Lady Greville," he said, "and I personally do not think I am

engaged elsewhere." He paused in thought, as though to make quite sure he was not. "No," he added, "I have no other engagement. I will come with pleasure."

Sir Charles rose and clapped his hands for the orderly. "Possibly the ladies will come up to the veranda?" he asked. "I cannot allow them to remain at the end of my wharf." He turned, and gave directions to the orderly to bring limes and bottles of soda and ice, and led the way across the lawn.

Mrs. Collier and her friend had not explored the grounds of Government House for over ten minutes before Sir Charles felt that many years ago he had personally arranged their visit, that he had known them for even a longer time, and that, now that they had finally arrived, they must never depart.

To them there was apparently nothing on his domain which did not thrill with delightful interest. They were as eager as two children at a pantomime, and as unconscious. As a rule, Sir Charles had found it rather difficult to meet the women of his colony on a path which they were capable of treading intelligently. In fairness to them, he had always sought out some topic in which they could take an equal part—something connected with the conduct of children, or the better ventila-

tion of the new school-house and chapel. But these new-comers did not require him to select topics of conversation; they did not even wait for him to finish those which he himself introduced. They flitted from one end of the garden to the other with the eagerness of two midshipmen on shore leave, and they found something to enjoy in what seemed to the Governor the most commonplace of things. The Zouave uniform of the sentry, the old Spanish cannon converted into peaceful gate-posts, the aviary with its screaming paroquets, the botanical station, and even the ice-machine were all objects of delight.

On the other hand, the interior of the famous palace, which had been sent out complete from London, and which was wont to fill the wives of the colonials with awe or to reduce them to whispers, for some reason failed of its effect. But they said they "loved" the large gold V. R.'s on the back of the Councillors' chairs, and they exclaimed aloud over the red leather despatch-boxes and the great seal of the colony, and the mysterious envelopes marked "On her Majesty's service."

"Isn't it too exciting, Florence?" demanded Mrs. Collier. "This is the table where Sir Charles sits and writes letters 'on her Majesty's service,' and presses these buttons, and war-ships spring up

in perfect shoals. Oh, Robert," she sighed, "I do wish you had been a Governor!"

The young lady called Florence stood looking down into the great arm-chair in front of the Governor's table.

"May I?" she asked. She slid fearlessly in between the oak arms of the chair and smiled about her. Afterward Sir Charles remembered her as she appeared at that moment with the red leather of the chair behind her, with her gloved hands resting on the carved oak, and her head on one side, smiling up at him. She gazed with large eyes at the blue linen envelopes, the stiff documents in red tape, the tray of black sand, and the goose-quill pens.

"I am now the Countess Zika," she announced; "no, I am Diana of the Crossways, and I mean to discover a state secret and sell it to the *Daily Telegraph*. Sir Charles," she demanded, "if I press this electric button is war declared anywhere, or what happens?"

"That second button," said Sir Charles, after deliberate scrutiny, "is the one which communicates with the pantry."

The Governor would not consider their returning to the yacht for luncheon.

"You might decide to steam away as suddenly as you came," he said, gallantly, "and I cannot

take that chance. This is Bachelor's Hall, so you must pardon my people if things do not go very smoothly." He himself led them to the great guest-chamber, where there had not been a guest for many years, and he noticed, as though for the first time, that the halls through which they passed were bare, and that the floor was littered with unpacked boxes and gun-cases. He also observed for the first time that maps of the colony, with the coffee-plantations and mahogany belt marked in different inks, were not perhaps so decorative as pictures and mirrors and family portraits. And he could have wished that the native servants had not stared so admiringly at the guests, nor directed each other in such aggressive whispers. On those other occasions, when the wives of the Councillors came to the semi-annual dinners, the native servants had seemed adequate to all that was required of them. He recollected with a flush that in the town these semi-annual dinners were described as banquets. He wondered if to these visitors from the outside world it was all equally provincial.

But their enjoyment was apparently unfeigned and generous. It was evident that they had known each other for many years, yet they received every remark that any of them made as though it had been pronounced by a new and interesting acquaint-

ance. Sir Charles found it rather difficult to keep up with the talk across the table, they changed the subject so rapidly, and they half spoke of so many things without waiting to explain. He could not at once grasp the fact that people who had no other position in the world save that of observers were speaking so authoritatively of public men and public measures. He found, to his delight, that for the first time in several years he was not presiding at his own table, and that his guests seemed to feel no awe of him.

"What's the use of a yacht nowadays?" Collier was saying—"what's the use of a yacht, when you can go to sleep in a wagon-lit at the Gare du Nord, and wake up at Vladivostok? And look at the time it saves; eleven days to Gib, six to Port Said, and fifteen to Colombo—there you are, only halfway around, and you're already sixteen days behind the man in the wagon-lit."

"But nobody wants to go to Vladivostok," said Miss Cameron, "or anywhere else in a wagon-lit. But with a yacht you can explore out-of-the-way places, and you meet new and interesting people. We wouldn't have met Sir Charles if we had waited for a wagon-lit." She bowed her head to the Governor, and he smiled with gratitude. He had lost Mr. Collier somewhere in the Indian Ocean,

and he was glad she had brought them back to the Windless Isles once more.

"And again I repeat that the answer to that is, 'Why not? said the March Hare,'" remarked Mr. Collier, determinedly.

The answer, as an answer, did not strike Sir Charles as a very good one. But the ladies seemed to comprehend, for Miss Cameron said: "Did I tell you about meeting him at Oxford just a few months before his death—at a children's tea-party? He was so sweet and understanding with them! Two women tried to lionize him, and he ran away and played with the children. I was more glad to meet him than anyone I can think of. Not as a personage, you know, but because I felt grateful to him."

"Yes, that way, distinctly," said Mrs. Collier. "I should have felt that way toward Mrs. Ewing more than anyone else."

"I know, 'Jackanapes,'" remarked Collier, shortly; "a brutal assault upon the feelings, I say."

"Someone else said it before you, Robert," Mrs. Collier commented, calmly. "Perhaps Sir Charles met him at Apia." They all turned and looked at him. He wished he could say he had met him at Apia. He did not quite see how they had made their way from a children's tea-party at Oxford to the South Pacific islands, but he was

anxious to join in somewhere with a clever observation. But they never seemed to settle in one place sufficiently long for him to recollect what he knew of it. He hoped they would get around to the west coast of Africa in time. He had been Governor of Sierra Leone for five years.

His success that night at dinner on the yacht was far better. The others seemed a little tired after the hours of sight-seeing to which he had treated them, and they were content to listen. In the absence of Mr. Clarges, who knew them word by word, he felt free to tell his three stories of life at Sierra Leone. He took his time in the telling, and could congratulate himself that his efforts had never been more keenly appreciated. He felt that he was holding his own.

The night was still and warm, and while the men lingered below at the table, the two women mounted to the deck and watched the lights of the town as they vanished one by one and left the moon in unchallenged possession of the harbor. For a long time Miss Cameron stood silent, looking out across the bay at the shore and the hills beyond. A fish splashed near them, and the sound of oars rose from the mist that floated above the water, until they were muffled in the distance. The palms along the shore glistened like silver, and overhead the Southern Cross shone white against

a sky of purple. The silence deepened and continued for so long a time that Mrs. Collier felt its significance, and waited for the girl to end it.

Miss Cameron raised her eyes to the stars and frowned. "I am not surprised that he is content to stay here," she said. "Are you? It is so beautiful, so wonderfully beautiful."

For a moment Mrs. Collier made no answer. "Two years is a long time, Florence," she said; "and he is all I have; he is not only my only brother, he is the only living soul who is related to me. That makes it harder."

The girl seemed to find some implied reproach in the speech, for she turned and looked at her friend closely. "Do you feel it is my fault, Alice?" she asked.

The older woman shook her head. "How could it be your fault?" she answered. "If you couldn't love him enough to marry him, you couldn't, that's all. But that is no reason why he should have hidden himself from all of us. Even if he could not stand being near you, caring as he did, he need not have treated me so. We have done all we can do, and Robert has been more than fine about it. He and his agents have written to every consul and business house in Central America, and I don't believe there is a city that he hasn't visited. He has sent him money

and letters to every bank and to every post-office——"

The girl raised her head quickly.

"—but he never calls for either," Mrs. Collier continued, "for I know that if he had read my letters he would have come home."

The girl lifted her head as though she were about to speak, and then turned and walked slowly away. After a few moments she returned, and stood, with her hands resting on the rail, looking down into the water. "I wrote him two letters," she said. In the silence of the night her voice was unusually clear and distinct. "I—you make me wonder—if they ever reached him."

Mrs. Collier, with her eyes fixed upon the girl, rose slowly from her chair and came toward her. She reached out her hand and touched Miss Cameron on the arm. "Florence," she said, in a whisper, "have you——"

The girl raised her head slowly, and lowered it again. "Yes," she answered; "I told him to come back—to come back to me. Alice," she cried, "I—I begged him to come back!" She tossed her hands apart and again walked rapidly away, leaving the older woman standing motionless.

A moment later, when Sir Charles and Mr. Collier stepped out upon the deck, they discovered

the two women standing close together, two white, ghostly figures in the moonlight, and as they advanced toward them they saw Mrs. Collier take the girl for an instant in her arms.

Sir Charles was asking Miss Cameron how long she thought an immigrant should be made to work for his freehold allotment, when Mr. Collier and his wife rose at the same moment and departed on separate errands. They met most mysteriously in the shadow of the wheel-house.

"What is it? Is anything wrong with Florence?" Collier asked, anxiously. "Not homesick, is she?"

Mrs. Collier put her hands on her husband's shoulder and shook her head.

"Wrong? No, thank Heaven! it's as right as right can be!" she cried. "She's written to him to come back, but he's never answered, and so—and now it's all right."

Mr. Collier gazed blankly at his wife's upturned face. "Well, I don't see that," he remonstrated. "What's the use of her being in love with him now when he can't be found? What? Why didn't she love him two years ago when he was where you could get at him—at her house, for instance. He was there most of his time. She would have saved a lot of trouble. However," he added, energetically, "this makes it absolutely

necessary to find that young man and bring him to his senses. We'll search this place for the next few days, and then we'll try the mainland again. I think I'll offer a reward for him, and have it printed in Spanish, and paste it up in all the plazas. We might add a line in English, 'She has changed her mind.' That would bring him home, wouldn't it?"

"Don't be unfeeling, Robert," said Mrs. Collier.

Her husband raised his eyes appealingly, and addressed himself to the moon. "I ask you now," he complained, "is that fair to a man who has spent six months on muleback trying to round up a prodigal brother-in-law?"

That same evening, after the ladies had gone below, Mr. Collier asked Sir Charles to assist him in his search for his wife's brother, and Sir Charles heartily promised his most active co-operation. There were several Americans at work in the interior, he said, as overseers on the coffee-plantations. It was possible that the runaway might be among them. It was only that morning, Sir Charles remembered, that an American had been at work "repairing his lawn-mower," as he considerately expressed it. He would send for him on the morrow.

But on the morrow the slave of the lawn-mower

was reported on the list of prisoners as "missing," and Corporal Mallon was grieved, but refused to consider himself responsible. Sir Charles himself had allowed the vagrant unusual freedom, and the vagrant had taken advantage of it, and probably escaped to the hills, or up the river to the logwood camp.

"Telegraph a description of him to Inspector Garrett," Sir Charles directed, "and to the heads of all up stations. And when he returns, bring him to me."

So great was his zeal that Sir Charles further offered to join Mr. Collier in his search among the outlying plantations; but Mr. Collier preferred to work alone. He accordingly set out at once, armed with letters to the different district inspectors, and in his absence delegated to Sir Charles the pleasant duty of caring for the wants of Miss Cameron and his wife. Sir Charles regarded the latter as deserving of all sympathy, for Mr. Collier, in his efforts to conceal the fact from the Governor that Florence Cameron was responsible, or in any way concerned in the disappearance of the missing man, had been too mysterious. Sir Charles was convinced that the fugitive had swindled his brother-in-law and stolen his sister's jewels.

The days which followed were to the Governor

days and nights of strange discoveries. He recognized that the missionaries from the great outside world had invaded his shores and disturbed his gods and temples. Their religion of progress and activity filled him with doubt and unrest.

"In this century," Mr. Collier had declared, "nothing can stand still. It's the same with a corporation, or a country, or a man. We must either march ahead or fall out. We can't mark time. What?"

"Exactly—certainly not," Sir Charles had answered. But in his heart he knew that he himself had been marking time under these soft tropical skies while the world was pushing forward. The thought had not disturbed him before. Now he felt guilty. He conceived a sudden intolerance, if not contempt, for the little village of whitewashed houses, for the rafts of mahogany and of logwood that bumped against the pier-heads, for the sacks of coffee piled high like barricades under the corrugated zinc sheds along the wharf. Each season it had been his pride to note the increase in these exports. The development of the resources of his colony had been a work in which he had felt that the Colonial Secretary took an immediate interest. He had believed that he was one of the important wheels of the machinery

which moved the British Empire: and now, in a day, he was undeceived. It was forced upon him that to the eyes of the outside world he was only a green-grocer operating on a large scale; he provided the British public with coffee for its breakfast, with drugs for its stomach, and with strange woods for its dining-room furniture and walking-sticks. He combated this ignominious characterization of his position indignantly. The new arrivals certainly gave him no hint that they considered him so lightly. This thought greatly comforted him, for he felt that in some way he was summoning to his aid all of his assets and resources to meet an expert and final valuation. As he ranged them before him he was disturbed and happy to find that the value he placed upon them was the value they would have in the eyes of a young girl—not a girl of the shy, mother-obeying, man-worshipping English type, but a girl such as Miss Cameron seemed to be, a girl who could understand what you were trying to say before you said it, who could take an interest in rates of exchange and preside at a dinner table, who was charmingly feminine and clever, and who was respectful of herself and of others. In fact, he decided, with a flush, that Miss Cameron herself was the young girl he had in his mind.

"Why not?" he asked.

The question came to him in his room, the sixth night of their visit, and he strode over to the long pier-glass and stood studying himself critically for the first time in years. He was still a fine-looking, well-kept man. His hair was thin, but that fact did not show; and his waist was lost, but riding and tennis would set that right. He had means outside of his official salary, and there was the title, such as it was. Lady Greville the wife of the birthday knight sounded as well as Lady Greville the marchioness. And Americans cared for these things. He doubted whether this particular American would do so, but he was adding up all he had to offer, and that was one of the assets. He was sure she would not be content to remain mistress of the Windless Isles. Nor, indeed, did he longer care to be master there, now that he had inhaled this quick, stirring breath from the outer world. He would resign, and return and mix with the world again. He would enter Parliament; a man so well acquainted as himself with the Gold Coast of Africa and with the trade of the West Indies must always be of value in the Lower House. This value would be recognized, no doubt, and he would become at first an Under-Secretary for the Colonies, and then, in time, Colonial Secretary and a cabinet minister. She would like that, he thought. And after that place had

been reached, all things were possible. For years he had not dreamed such dreams—not since he had been a clerk in the Foreign Office. They seemed just as possible now as they had seemed real then, and just as near. He felt it was all absolutely in his own hands.

He descended to the dining-room with the air of a man who already felt the cares of high responsibility upon his shoulders. His head was erect and his chest thrown forward. He was ten years younger; his manner was alert, assured, and gracious. As he passed through the halls he was impatient of the familiar settings of Government House; they seemed to him like the furnishings of a hotel where he had paid his bill, and where his luggage was lying strapped for departure in the hallway.

In his library he saw on his table a number of papers lying open waiting for his signature, the dog-tax among the others. He smiled to remember how important it had seemed to him in the past—in that past of indolence and easy content. Now he was on fire to put this rekindled ambition to work, to tell the woman who had lighted it that it was all from her and for her, that without her he had existed, that now he had begun to live.

They had never found him so delightful as he

appeared that night. He was like a man on the eve of a holiday. He made a jest of his past efforts; he made them see, as he now saw it for the first time, that side of the life of the Windless Isles which was narrow and petty, even ridiculous. He talked of big men in a big way; he criticised, and expounded, and advanced his own theories of government and the proper control of an empire.

Collier, who had returned from his unsuccessful search of the plantations, shook his head.

"It's a pity you are not in London now," he said, sincerely. "They need someone there who has been on the spot. They can't direct the colonies from what they know of them in Whitehall."

Sir Charles fingered the dinner-cloth nervously, and when he spoke, fixed his eyes anxiously upon Miss Cameron.

"Do you know," he said, "I have been thinking of doing that very thing, of resigning my post here and going back, entering Parliament, and all the rest of it."

His declaration met with a unanimous chorus of delight. Miss Cameron nodded her head with eager approval.

"Yes, if I were a man, that is where I should wish to be," she said, "at the heart of it. Why,

whatever you say in the House of Commons is heard all over the world the next morning."

Sir Charles felt the blood tingle in his pulses. He had not been so stirred in years. Her words ran to his head like wine.

Mr. Collier raised his glass.

"Here's to our next meeting," he said, "on the terrace of the House of Commons."

But Miss Cameron interrupted. "No; to the Colonial Secretary," she amended.

"Oh, yes," they assented, rising, and so drank his health, smiling down upon him with kind, friendly glances and good-will.

"To the Colonial Secretary," they said. Sir Charles clasped the arms of his chair tightly with his hands; his eyes were half closed, and his lips pressed into a grim, confident smile. He felt that a single word from her would make all that they suggested possible. If she cared for such things, they were hers; he had them to give; they were ready lying at her feet. He knew that the power had always been with him, lying dormant in his heart and brain. It had only waited for the touch of the Princess to wake it into life.

The American visitors were to sail for the mainland the next day, but he had come to know them so well in the brief period of their visit that he felt he dared speak to her that same night. At

least he could give her some word that would keep him in her mind until they met again in London, or until she had considered her answer. He could not expect her to answer at once. She could take much time. What else had he to do now but to wait for her answer? It was now all that made life.

Collier and his wife had left the veranda and had crossed the lawn toward the water's edge. The moonlight fell full upon them with all the splendor of the tropics, and lit the night with a brilliant, dazzling radiance. From where Miss Cameron sat on the veranda in the shadow, Sir Charles could see only the white outline of her figure and the indolent movement of her fan. Collier had left his wife and was returning slowly toward the step. Sir Charles felt that if he meant to speak he must speak now, and quickly. He rose and placed himself beside her in the shadow, and the girl turned her head inquiringly and looked up at him.

But on the instant the hush of the night was broken by a sharp challenge, and the sound of men's voices raised in anger; there was the noise of a struggle on the gravel, and from the corner of the house the two sentries came running, dragging between them a slight figure that fought and wrestled to be free.

Sir Charles exclaimed with indignant impatience, and, turning, strode quickly to the head of the steps.

"What does this mean?" he demanded. "What are you doing with that man? Why did you bring him here?"

As the soldiers straightened to attention, their prisoner ceased to struggle, and stood with his head bent on his chest. His sombrero was pulled down low across his forehead.

"He was crawling through the bushes, Sir Charles," the soldier panted, "watching that gentleman, sir,"—he nodded over his shoulder toward Collier. "I challenged, and he jumped to run, and we collared him. He resisted, Sir Charles."

The mind of the Governor was concerned with other matters than trespassers.

"Well, take him to the barracks, then," he said. "Report to me in the morning. That will do."

The prisoner wheeled eagerly, without further show of resistance, and the soldiers closed in on him on either side. But as the three men moved away together, their faces, which had been in shadow, were now turned toward Mr. Collier, who was advancing leisurely, and with silent footsteps, across the grass. He met them face to face, and as he did so the prisoner sprang back and threw out his arms in front of him, with the gesture of

a man who entreats silence. Mr. Collier halted as though struck to stone, and the two men confronted each other without moving.

"Good God!" Mr. Collier whispered.

He turned stiffly and slowly, as though in a trance, and beckoned to his wife, who had followed him.

"Alice!" he called. He stepped backward toward her and, taking her hand in one of his drew her toward the prisoner. "Here he is!" he said.

They heard her cry "Henry!" with the fierceness of a call for help, and saw her rush forward and stumble into the arms of the prisoner, and their two heads were bent close together.

Collier ran up the steps and explained breathlessly.

"And now," he gasped, in conclusion, "what's to be done? What's he arrested for? Is it bailable? What?"

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Sir Charles, miserably. "It is my fault entirely. I assure you I had no idea. How could I? But I should have known, I should have guessed it." He dismissed the sentries with a gesture. "That will do," he said. "Return to your posts."

Mr. Collier laughed with relief.

"Then it is not serious?" he asked.

"He—he had no money, that was all," exclaimed Sir Charles. "Serious? Certainly not. Upon my word, I'm sorry——"

The young man had released himself from his sister's embrace, and was coming toward them; and Sir Charles, eager to redeem himself, advanced hurriedly to greet him. But the young man did not see him; he was looking past him up the steps to where Miss Cameron stood in the shadow.

Sir Charles hesitated and drew back. The young man stopped at the foot of the steps, and stood with his head raised, staring up at the white figure of the girl, who came slowly forward.

It was forced upon Sir Charles that in spite of the fact that the young man before them had but just then been rescued from arrest, that in spite of his mean garments and ragged sandals, something about him—the glamour that surrounds the prodigal, or possibly the moonlight—gave him an air of great dignity and distinction.

As Miss Cameron descended the stairs, Sir Charles recognized for the first time that the young man was remarkably handsome, and he resented it. It hurt him, as did also the prodigal's youth and his assured bearing. He felt a sudden sinking fear, a weakening of all his vital forces, and he drew in his breath slowly and deeply. But no

The young man stood staring up at the white figure of the girl.

one noticed him; they were looking at the tall figure of the prodigal, standing with his hat at his hip and his head thrown back, holding the girl with his eyes.

Collier touched Sir Charles on the arm, and nodded his head toward the library. "Come," he whispered, "let us old people leave them together. They've a good deal to say." Sir Charles obeyed in silence, and, crossing the library to the great oak door, seated himself and leaned wearily on the table before him. He picked up one of the goose quills and began separating it into little pieces. Mr. Collier was pacing up and down, biting excitedly on the end of his cigar. "Well, this has certainly been a great night," he said. "And it is all due to you, Sir Charles—all due to you. Yes, they have you to thank for it."

"They?" said Sir Charles. He knew that it had to come. He wanted the man to strike quickly.

"They? Yes—Florence Cameron and Henry," Mr. Collier answered. "Henry went away because she wouldn't marry him. She didn't care for him then, but afterward she cared. Now they're reunited,—and so they're happy; and my wife is more than happy, and I won't have to bother any more; and it's all right, and all through you."

"I am glad," said Sir Charles. There was a

long pause, which the men, each deep in his own thoughts, did not notice.

"You will be leaving now, I suppose?" Sir Charles asked. He was looking down, examining the broken pen in his hand.

Mr. Collier stopped in his walk and considered. "Yes, I suppose they will want to get back," he said. "I shall be sorry myself. And you? What will you do?"

Sir Charles started slightly. He had not yet thought what he would do. His eyes wandered over the neglected work which had accumulated on the desk before him. Only an hour before he had thought of it as petty and little, as something unworthy of his energy. Since that time what change had taken place in him?

For him everything had changed, he answered, but in him there had been no change; and if this thing which the girl had brought into his life had meant the best in life, it must always mean that. She had been an inspiration; she must remain his spring of action. Was he a slave, he asked himself, that he should rebel? Was he a boy, that he could turn his love to aught but the best account? He must remember her not as the woman who had crushed his spirit, but as she who had helped him, who had lifted him up to something better and finer. He would make sacrifice in her

name; it would be in her name that he would rise to high places and accomplish much good.

She would not know this, but he would know.

He rose and brushed the papers away from him with an impatient sweep of the hand.

"I shall follow out the plan of which I spoke at dinner," he answered. "I shall resign here, and return home and enter Parliament."

Mr. Collier laughed admiringly. "I love the way you English take your share of public life," he said, "the way you spend yourselves for your country, and give your brains, your lives, everything you have—all for the empire."

Through the open window Sir Charles saw Miss Cameron half hidden by the vines of the veranda. The moonlight falling about her transformed her into a figure which was ideal, mysterious, and elusive, like a woman in a dream. He shook his head wearily. "For the empire?" he asked.

THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

The Last Ride Together

A SKETCH CONTAINING THREE POINTS OF VIEW

What the Poet Laureate wrote

"THERE are girls in the Gold Reef City,
There are mothers and children too!
And they cry 'Hurry up, for pity!'
So what can a brave man do?

"I suppose we were wrong, were mad men,
Still I think at the Judgment Day,
When God sifts the good from the bad men,
There'll be something more to say."

What more the Lord Chief Justice found to say

"In this case we know the immediate consequence of your crime. It has been the loss of human life, it has been the disturbance of public peace, it has been the creation of a certain sense of distrust of public professions and of public

faith. . . . The sentence of this court therefore is that, as to you, Leander Starr Jameson, you be confined for a period of fifteen months without hard labor; that you, Sir John Willoughby, have ten months' imprisonment; and that you, etc., etc."

London Times, July 29th.

What the Hon. "Reggie" Blake thought about it

"H. M. Holloway Prison,
"July 28th.

"I am going to keep a diary while I am in prison; that is, if they will let me. I never kept one before, because I hadn't the time. When I was home on leave there was too much going on to bother about it, and when I was up country I always came back after a day's riding so tired that I was too sleepy to write anything. And now that I have the time, I won't have anything to write about. I fancy that more things happened to me to-day than are likely to happen again for the next eight months, so I will make this day take up as much room in the diary as it can. I am writing this on the back of the paper the Warder uses for his official reports, while he is hunting up cells to put us in. We came down on him rather unexpectedly and he is nervous.

"Of course, I had prepared myself for this after a fashion, but now I see that somehow I never really did think I would be in here, and all my friends outside, and everything going on just the same as though I wasn't alive somewhere. It's like telling yourself that your horse can't possibly pull off a race, so that you won't mind so much if he doesn't, but you always feel just as bad when he comes in a loser. A man can't fool himself into thinking one way when he is hoping the other.

"But I am glad it is over, and settled. It was a great bore not knowing your luck and having the thing hanging over your head every morning when you woke up. Indeed it was quite a relief when the counsel got all through arguing over those proclamations, and the Chief Justice summed up, but I nearly went to sleep when I found he was going all over it again to the jury. I didn't understand about those proclamations myself, and I'll lay a fiver the jury didn't, either. The Colonel said he didn't. I couldn't keep my mind on what Russell was explaining about, and I got to thinking how much old Justice Hawkins looked like the counsel in 'Alice in Wonderland' when they tried the knave of spades for stealing the tarts. He had just the same sort of a beak and the same sort of a wig, and I wondered why he had his wig

powdered and the others didn't. Pollock's wig had a hole in the top; you could see it when he bent over to take notes. He was always taking notes. I don't believe he understood about those proclamations, either; he never seemed to listen, anyway.

"The Chief Justice certainly didn't love us very much, that's sure; and he wasn't going to let anybody else love us either. I felt quite the Christian Martyr when Sir Edward was speaking in defence. He made it sound as though we were all a lot of Adelphi heroes and ought to be promoted and have medals, but when Lord Russell started in to read the Riot Act at us I began to believe that hanging was too good for me. I'm sure I never knew I was disturbing the peace of nations; it seems like such a large order for a subaltern.

"But the worst was when they made us stand up before all those people to be sentenced. I must say I felt shaky about the knees then, not because I was afraid of what was coming, but because it was the first time I had ever been pointed out before people, and made to feel ashamed. And having those girls there, too, looking at one. That wasn't just fair to us. It made me feel about ten years old, and I remembered how the Head Master used to call me to his desk and say, 'Blake Senior, two pages of Horace and keep in bounds

for a week.' And then I heard our names and the months, and my name and 'eight months' imprisonment,' and there was a bustle and murmur and the tipstaves cried, 'Order in the Court,' and the Judges stood up and shook out their big red skirts as though they were shaking off the contamination of our presence, and rustled away, and I sat down, wondering how long eight months was, and wishing they'd given me as much as they gave Jameson.

"They put us in a room together then, and our counsel said how sorry they were, and shook hands, and went off to dinner and left us. I thought they might have waited with us and been a little late for dinner just that once; but no one waited except a lot of costers outside whom we did not know. It was eight o'clock and still quite light when we came out, and there was a line of four-wheelers and a hansom ready for us. I'd been hoping they would take us out by the Strand entrance, just because I'd like to have seen it again, but they marched us instead through the main quadrangle—a beastly, gloomy courtyard that echoed—and out into Carey Street—such a dirty, gloomy street. The costers and clerks set up a sort of a cheer when we came out, and one of them cried, 'God bless you, sir,' to the doctor, but I was sorry they cheered. It seemed like kicking

against the umpire's decision. The Colonel and I got into a hansom together and we trotted off into Chancery Lane and turned into Holborn. Most of the shops were closed, and the streets looked empty, but there was a lighted clock-face over Mooney's public-house, and the hands stood at a quarter past eight. I didn't know where Holloway was, and was hoping they would have to take us through some decent streets to reach it; but we didn't see a part of the city that meant anything to me, or that I would choose to travel through again.

"Neither of us talked, and I imagined that the people in the streets knew we were going to prison, and I kept my eyes on the enamel card on the back of the apron. I suppose I read, 'Two-wheeled hackney carriage: if hired and discharged within the four-mile limit, 1*s*.' at least a hundred times. I got more sensible after a bit, and when we had turned into Gray's Inn Road I looked up and saw a tram in front of us with 'Holloway Road and King's X,' painted on the steps, and the Colonel saw it about the same time, I fancy, for we each looked at the other, and the Colonel raised his eyebrows. It showed us that at least the cabman knew where we were going.

" 'They might have taken us for a turn through the West End first, I think,' the Colonel said.

'I'd like to have had a look around, wouldn't you? This isn't a cheerful neighborhood, is it?'

"There were a lot of children playing in St. Andrew's Gardens, and a crowd of them ran out just as we passed, shrieking and laughing over nothing, the way kiddies do, and that was about the only pleasant sight in the ride. I had quite a turn when we came to the New Hospital just beyond, for I thought it was Holloway, and it came over me what eight months in such a place meant. I believe if I hadn't pulled myself up sharp, I'd have jumped out into the street and run away. It didn't last more than a few seconds, but I don't want any more like them. I was afraid, afraid—there's no use pretending it was anything else. I was in a dumb, silly funk, and I turned sick inside and shook, as I have seen a horse shake when he shies at nothing and sweats and trembles down his sides.

"During those few seconds it seemed to be more than I could stand; I felt sure that I couldn't do it—that I'd go mad if they tried to force me. The idea was so terrible—of not being master over your own legs and arms, to have your flesh and blood and what brains God gave you buried alive in stone walls as though they were in a safe with a time-lock on the door set for eight months ahead. There's nothing to be afraid of in a stone wall

really, but it's the idea of the thing—of not being free to move about, especially to a chap that has always lived in the open as I have, and has had men under him. It was no wonder I was in a funk for a minute. I'll bet a fiver the others were, too, if they'll only own up to it. I don't mean for long, but just when the idea first laid hold of them. Anyway, it was a good lesson to me, and if I catch myself thinking of it again I'll whistle, or talk to myself out loud and think of something cheerful. And I don't mean to be one of those chaps who spends his time in jail counting the stones in his cell, or training spiders, or measuring how many of his steps make a mile, for madness lies that way. I mean to sit tight and think of all the good times I've had, and go over them in my mind very slowly, so as to make them last longer and remember who was there and what we said, and the jokes and all that; I'll go over house-parties I have been on, and the times I've had in the Riviera, and scouting parties Dr. Jim led up country when we were taking Matabele Land.

"They say that if you're good here they give you things to read after a month or two, and then I can read up all those instructive books that a fellow never does read until he's laid up in bed.

"But that's crowding ahead a bit; I must keep

to what happened to-day. We struck York Road at the back of the Great Western Terminus, and I half hoped we might see some chap we knew coming or going away: I would like to have waved my hand to him. It would have been fun to have seen his surprise the next morning when he read in the paper that he had been bowing to jail-birds, and then I would like to have cheated the tipstaves out of just one more friendly good-by. I wanted to say good-by to somebody, but I really couldn't feel sorry to see the last of anyone of those we passed in the streets—they were such a dirty, unhappy-looking lot, and the railroad wall ran on forever apparently, and we might have been in a foreign country for all we knew of it. There were just sooty gray brick tenements and gas-works on one side, and the railroad cutting on the other, and semaphores and telegraph wires overhead, and smoke and grime everywhere, it looked exactly like the sort of street that should lead to a prison, and it seemed a pity to take a smart hansom and a good cob into it.

"It was just a bit different from our last ride together—when we rode through the night from Krugers-Dorp with hundreds of horses' hoofs pounding on the soft veldt behind us, and the carbines clanking against the stirrups as they swung on the sling belts. We were being hunted then,

harassed on either side, scurrying for our lives like the Derby Dog in a race-track when everyone hoots him and no man steps out to help—we were sick for sleep, sick for food, lashed by the rain, and we knew that we were beaten; but we were free still, and under open skies with the derricks of the Rand rising like gallows on our left, and Johannesburg only fifteen miles away."

THE EDITOR'S STORY

The Editor's Story

IT was a warm afternoon in the early spring, and the air in the office was close and heavy. The letters of the morning had been answered and the proofs corrected, and the gentlemen who had come with ideas worth one column at space rates, and which they thought worth three, had compromised with the editor on a basis of two, and departed. The editor's desk was covered with manuscripts in a heap, a heap that never seemed to grow less, and each manuscript bore a character of its own, as marked or as unobtrusive as the character of the man or of the woman who had written it, which disclosed itself in the care with which some were presented for consideration, in the vain little ribbons of others, or the selfish manner in which still others were tightly rolled or vilely scribbled.

The editor held the first page of a poem in his hand, and was reading it mechanically, for its length had already declared against it, unless it might chance to be the precious gem out of a thousand, which must be chosen in spite of its

From "Cinderella and Other Stories." Copyright, 1898, by Charles Scribner's Sons.

twenty stanzas. But as the editor read, his interest awakened, and he scanned the verses again, as one would turn to look a second time at a face which seemed familiar. At the fourth stanza his memory was still in doubt, at the sixth it was warming to the chase, and at the end of the page was in full cry. He caught up the second page and looked for the final verse, and then at the name below, and then back again quickly to the title of the poem, and pushed aside the papers on his desk in search of any note which might have accompanied it.

The name signed at the bottom of the second page was Edwin Aram, the title of the poem was "Bohemia," and there was no accompanying note, only the name Berkeley written at the top of the first page. The envelope in which it had come gave no further clew. It was addressed in the same handwriting as that in which the poem had been written, and it bore the postmark of New York city. There was no request for the return of the poem, no direction to which either the poem itself or the check for its payment in the event of its acceptance might be sent. Berkeley might be the name of an apartment-house, or of a country place, or of a suburban town.

The editor stepped out of his office into the larger room beyond and said: "I've a poem here

that appeared in an American magazine about seven years ago. I remember the date, because I read it when I was at college. Someone is either trying to play a trick on us, or to get money by stealing some other man's brains."

It was in this way that Edwin Aram first introduced himself to our office, and while his poem was not accepted, it was not returned. On the contrary, Mr. Aram became to us one of the most interesting of our would-be contributors, and there was no author, no matter of what popularity, for whose work we waited with greater impatience. But Mr. Aram's personality still remained as completely hidden from us as were the productions which he offered from the sight of our subscribers; for each of the poems he sent had been stolen outright and signed with his name.

It was through no fault of ours that he continued to blush unseen, or that his pretty taste in poems was unappreciated by the general reader. We followed up every clew and every hint he chose to give us with an enthusiasm worthy of a search after a lost explorer, and with an animus worthy of better game. Yet there was some reason for our interest. The man who steals the work of another and who passes it off as his own is the special foe of every editor, but this particular editor had a personal distrust of Mr. Aram.

He imagined that these poems might possibly be a trap which someone had laid for him with the purpose of drawing him into printing them, and then of pointing out by this fact how little read he was, and how unfit to occupy the swivel-chair into which he had so lately dropped. Or if this were not the case, the man was in any event the enemy of all honest people, who look unkindly on those who try to obtain money by false pretences.

The evasions of Edwin Aram were many, and his methods to avoid detection not without skill. His second poem was written on a sheet of notepaper bearing the legend "The Shakespeare Debating Club. Edwin Aram, President."

This was intended to reassure us as to his literary taste and standard, and to meet any suspicion we might feel had there been no address of any sort accompanying the poem. No one we knew had ever heard of a Shakespeare Debating Club in New York city; but we gave him the benefit of the doubt until we found that this poem, like the first, was also stolen. His third poem bore his name and an address, which on instant inquiry turned out to be that of a vacant lot on Seventh Avenue near Central Park.

Edwin Aram had by this time become an exasperating and picturesque individual, and the

editorial staff was divided in its opinion concerning him. It was argued on one hand that as the man had never sent us a real address, his object must be to gain a literary reputation at the expense of certain poets, and not to make money at ours. Others answered this by saying that fear of detection alone kept Edwin Aram from sending his real address, but that as soon as his poem was printed, and he ascertained by that fact that he had not been discovered, he would put in an application for payment, and let us know quickly enough to what portion of New York city his check should be forwarded.

This, however, presupposed the fact that he was writing to us over his real name, which we did not believe he would dare to do. No one in our little circle of journalists and literary men had ever heard of such a man, and his name did not appear in the directory. This fact, however, was not convincing in itself, as the residents of New York move from flat to hotel, and from apartments to boarding-houses as frequently as the Arab changes his camping-ground. We tried to draw him out at last by publishing a personal paragraph which stated that several contributions received from Edwin Aram would be returned to him if he would send stamps and his present address. The editor did not add that he would re-

turn the poems in person, but such was his warlike intention.

This had the desired result, and brought us a fourth poem and a fourth address, the name of a tall building which towers above Union Square. We seemed to be getting very warm now, and the editor gathered up the four poems, and called to his aid his friend Bronson, the ablest reporter on the New York ——, who was to act as chronicler. They took with them letters from the authors of two of the poems and from the editor of the magazine in which the first one had originally appeared, testifying to the fact that Edwin Aram had made an exact copy of the original, and wishing the brother editor good luck in catching the plagiarist.

The reporter looked these over with a critical eye. "The City Editor told me if we caught him," he said, "that I could let it run for all it was worth. I can use these names, I suppose, and I guess they have pictures of the poets at the office. If he turns out to be anybody in particular, it ought to be worth a full three columns. Sunday paper, too."

The amateur detectives stood in the lower hall in the tall building, between swinging doors, and jostled by hurrying hundreds, while they read the names on a marble directory.

"There he is!" said the editor, excitedly. "'American Literary Bureau.' One room on the fourteenth floor. That's just the sort of a place in which we would be likely to find him." But the reporter was gazing open-eyed at a name in large letters on an office door. "Edward K. Aram," it read, "Commissioner of ——, and City ——."

"What do you think of *that?*" he gasped, triumphantly.

"Nonsense," said the editor. "He wouldn't dare; besides, the initials are different. You're expecting too good a story."

"That's the way to get them," answered the reporter, as he hurried toward the office of the City ——. "If a man falls dead, believe it's a suicide until you prove it's not; if you find a suicide, believe it's a murder until you are convinced to the contrary. Otherwise you'll get beaten. We don't want the proprietor of a little literary bureau, we want a big city official, and I'll believe we have one until he proves we haven't."

"Which are you going to ask for?" whispered the editor, "Edward K. or Edwin?"

"Edwin, I should say," answered the reporter. "He has probably given notice that mail addressed that way should go to him."

"Is Mr. Edwin Aram in?" he asked.

A clerk raised his head and looked behind him. "No," he said; "his desk is closed. I guess he's gone home for the day."

The reporter nudged the editor savagely with his elbow, but his face gave no sign. "That's a pity," he said; "we have an appointment with him. He still lives at Sixty-first Street and Madison Avenue, I believe, does he not?"

"No," said the clerk; "that's his father, the Commissioner, Edward K. The son lives at ——. Take the Sixth Avenue elevated and get off at 116th Street."

"Thank you," said the reporter. He turned a triumphant smile upon the editor. "We've got him!" he said, excitedly. "And the son of old Edward K., too! Think of it! Trying to steal a few dollars by cribbing other men's poems; that's the best story there has been in the papers for the past three months,—'Edward K. Aram's son a thief!' Look at the names—politicians, poets, editors, all mixed up in it. It's good for three columns, sure."

"We've got to think of his people, too," urged the editor, as they mounted the steps of the elevated road.

"He didn't think of them," said the reporter.

The house in which Mr. Aram lived was an

apartment-house, and the brass latchets in the hallway showed that it contained three suites. There were visiting-cards under the latchets of the first and third stories, and under that of the second a piece of note-paper on which was written the autograph of Edwin Aram. The editor looked at it curiously. He had never believed it to be a real name.

"I am sorry Edwin Aram did not turn out to be a woman," he said, regretfully; "it would have been so much more interesting."

"Now," instructed Bronson, impressively, "whether he is in or not we have him. If he's not in, we wait until he comes, even if he doesn't come until morning; we don't leave this place until we have seen him."

"Very well," said the editor.

The maid left them standing at the top of the stairs while she went to ask if Mr. Aram was in, and whether he would see two gentlemen who did not give their names because they were strangers to him. The two stood silent while they waited, eying each other anxiously, and when the girl reopened the door, nodded pleasantly, and said, "Yes, Mr. Aram is in," they hurried past her as though they feared that he would disappear in mid-air, or float away through the windows before they could reach him.

And yet, when they stood at last face to face with him, he bore a most disappointing air of every-day respectability. He was a tall, thin young man, with light hair and mustache and large blue eyes. His back was toward the window, so that his face was in the shadow, and he did not rise as they entered. The room in which he sat was a prettily furnished one, opening into another tiny room, which, from the number of books in it, might have been called a library. The rooms had a well-to-do, even prosperous, air, but they did not show any evidences of a pronounced taste on the part of their owner, either in the way in which they were furnished or in the decorations of the walls. A little girl of about seven or eight years of age, who was standing between her father's knees, with a hand on each, and with her head thrown back on his shoulder, looked up at the two visitors with evident interest, and smiled brightly.

"Mr. Aram?" asked the editor, tentatively.

The young man nodded, and the two visitors seated themselves.

"I wish to talk to you on a matter of private business," the editor began. "Wouldn't it be better to send the little girl away?"

The child shook her head violently at this, and crowded up closely to her father; but he held her

away from him gently, and told her to "run and play with Annie."

She passed the two visitors, with her head held scornfully in air, and left the men together. Mr. Aram seemed to have a most passive and incurious disposition. He could have no idea as to who his anonymous visitors might be, nor did he show any desire to know.

"I am the editor of ——," the editor began. "My friend also writes for that periodical. I have received several poems from you lately, Mr. Aram, and one in particular which we all liked very much. It was called 'Bohemia.' But it is so like one that has appeared under the same title in the —— *Magazine* that I thought I would see you about it, and ask you if you could explain the similarity. You see," he went on, "it would be less embarrassing if you would do so now than later, when the poem has been published and when people might possibly accuse you of plagiarism." The editor smiled encouragingly and waited.

Mr. Aram crossed one leg over the other and folded his hands in his lap. He exhibited no interest, and looked drowsily at the editor. When he spoke it was in a tone of unstudied indifference. "I never wrote a poem called 'Bohemia,'" he said, slowly; "at least, if I did I don't remember it."

The editor had not expected a flat denial, and it irritated him, for he recognized it to be the safest course the man could pursue, if he kept to it. "But you don't mean to say," he protested, smiling, "that you can write so excellent a poem as 'Bohemia' and then forget having done so?"

"I might," said Mr. Aram, unresentfully, and with little interest. "I scribble a good deal."

"Perhaps," suggested the reporter, politely, with the air of one who is trying to cover up a difficulty to the satisfaction of all, "Mr. Aram would remember it if he saw it."

The editor nodded his head in assent, and took the first page of the two on which the poem was written, and held it out to Mr. Aram, who accepted the piece of foolscap and eyed it listlessly.

"Yes, I wrote that," he said. "I copied it out of a book called 'Gems from American Poets.'" There was a lazy pause. "But I never sent it to any paper." The editor and the reporter eyed each other with outward calm but with some inward astonishment. They could not see why he had not adhered to his original denial of the thing *in toto*. It seemed to them so foolish to admit having copied the poem and then to deny having forwarded it.

"You see," explained Mr. Aram, still with no apparent interest in the matter, "I am very fond

of poetry; I like to recite it, and I often write it out in order to make me remember it. I find it impresses the words on my mind. Well, that's what has happened. I have copied this poem out at the office probably, and one of the clerks there has found it, and has supposed that I wrote it, and he has sent it to your paper as a sort of a joke on me. You see, father being so well known, it would rather amuse the boys if I came out as a poet. That's how it was, I guess. Somebody must have found it and sent it to you, because *I* never sent it."

There was a moment of thoughtful consideration. "I see," said the editor. "I used to do that same thing myself when I had to recite pieces at school. I found that writing the verses down helped me to remember them. I remember that I once copied out many of Shakespeare's sonnets. But, Mr. Aram, it never occurred to me, after having copied out one of Shakespeare's sonnets, to sign my own name at the bottom of it."

Mr. Aram's eyes dropped to the page of manuscript in his hand and rested there for some little time. Then he said, without raising his head, "I haven't signed this."

"No," replied the editor; "but you signed the second page, which I still have in my hand."

The editor and his companion expected some

expression of indignation from Mr. Aram at this, some question of their right to come into his house and cross-examine him and to accuse him, tentatively at least, of literary fraud, but they were disappointed. Mr. Aram's manner was still one of absolute impassibility. Whether this manner was habitual to him they could not know, but it made them doubt their own judgment in having so quickly accused him, as it bore the look of undismayed innocence.

It was the reporter who was the first to break the silence. "Perhaps someone has signed Mr. Aram's name—the clerk who sent it, for instance."

Young Mr. Aram looked up at him curiously, and held out his hand for the second page. "Yes," he drawled, "that's how it happened. That's not my signature. I never signed that."

The editor was growing restless. "I have several other poems here from you," he said; "one written from the rooms of the Shakespeare Debating Club, of which I see you are president. Your clerk could not have access there, could he? He did not write that, too?"

"No," said Mr. Aram, doubtfully, "he could not have written that."

The editor handed him the poem. "It's yours, then?"

"Yes, that's mine," Mr. Aram replied.

"And the signature?"

"Yes, and the signature. I wrote that myself," Mr. Aram explained, "and sent it myself. That other one ('Bohemia') I just copied out to remember, but this is original with me."

"And the envelope in which it was enclosed," asked the editor, "did you address that also?"

Mr. Aram examined it uninterestedly. "Yes, that's my handwriting too." He raised his head. His face wore an expression of patient politeness.

"Oh!" exclaimed the editor, suddenly, in some embarrassment. "I handed you the wrong envelope. I beg your pardon. That envelope is the one in which 'Bohemia' came."

The reporter gave a hardly perceptible start; his eyes were fixed on the pattern of the rug at his feet, and the editor continued to examine the papers in his hand. There was a moment's silence. From outside came the noise of children playing in the street and the rapid rush of a passing wagon.

When the two visitors raised their heads Mr. Aram was looking at them strangely, and the fingers folded in his lap were twisting in and out.

"This Shakespeare Debating Club," said the editor, "where are its rooms, Mr. Aram?"

"It has no rooms, now," answered the poet. "It has disbanded. It never had any regular rooms; we just met about and read."

"I see—exactly," said the editor. "And the house on Seventh Avenue from which your third poem was sent—did you reside there then, or have you always lived here?"

"No, yes—I used to live there—I lived there when I wrote that poem."

The editor looked at the reporter and back at Mr. Aram. "It is a vacant lot, Mr. Aram," he said, gravely.

There was a long pause. The poet rocked slowly up and down in his rocking-chair, and looked at his hands, which he rubbed over one another as though they were cold. Then he raised his head and cleared his throat.

"Well, gentlemen," he said, "you have made out your case."

"Yes," said the editor, regretfully, "we have made out our case." He could not help but wish that the fellow had stuck to his original denial. It was too easy a victory.

"I don't say, mind you," went on Mr. Aram, "that I ever took anybody's verses and sent them to a paper as my own, but I ask you, as one gentleman talking to another, and inquiring for information, what is there wrong in doing it? I say, *if* I had done it, which I don't admit I ever did, where's the harm?"

"Where's the harm?" cried the two visitors in chorus.

"Obtaining money under false pretences," said the editor, "is the harm you do the publishers, and robbing another man of the work of his brain and what credit belongs to him is the harm you do him, and telling a lie is the least harm done. Such a contemptible foolish lie, too, that you might have known would surely find you out in spite of the trouble you took to——"

"I never asked you for any money," interrupted Mr. Aram, quietly.

"But we would have sent it to you, nevertheless," retorted the editor, "if we had not discovered in time that the poems were stolen."

"Where would you have sent it?" asked Mr. Aram. "I never gave you a right address, did I? I ask you, did I?"

The editor paused in some confusion. "Well, if you did not want the money, what did you want?" he exclaimed. "I must say I should like to know."

Mr. Aram rocked himself to and fro, and gazed at his two inquisitors with troubled eyes. "I didn't see any harm in it then," he repeated. "I don't see any harm in it now. I didn't ask you for any money. I sort of thought," he said, confusedly, "that I should like to see my name in print. I wanted my friends to see it. I'd have liked to have shown it to—to—well, I'd like my wife to have seen it. She's interested in literature and books

and magazines and things like that. That was all I wanted. That's why I did it."

The reporter looked up askance at the editor, as a prompter watches the actor to see if he is ready to take his cue.

"How do I know that?" demanded the editor, sharply. He found it somewhat difficult to be severe with this poet, for the man admitted so much so readily, and would not defend himself. Had he only blustered and grown angry and ordered them out, instead of sitting helplessly there rocking to and fro and picking at the back of his hands, it would have made it so much easier. "How do we know," repeated the editor, "that you did not intend to wait until the poems had appeared, and then send us your real address and ask for the money, saying that you had moved since you had last written us?"

"Oh," protested Mr. Aram, "you know I never thought of that."

"I don't know anything of the sort," said the editor. "I only know that you have forged and lied and tried to obtain money that doesn't belong to you, and that I mean to make an example of you and frighten other men from doing the same thing. No editor has read every poem that was ever written, and there is no protection for him from such fellows as you, and the only thing he

can do when he does catch one of you is to make an example of him. That's what I am going to do. I am going to make an example of you. I am going to nail you up as people nail up dead crows to frighten off the live ones. It is my intention to give this to the papers to-night, and you know what they will do with it in the morning."

There was a long and most uncomfortable pause, and it is doubtful if the editor did not feel it as much as did the man opposite him. The editor turned to his friend for a glance of sympathy, or of disapproval even, but that gentleman still sat bending forward with his eyes fixed on the floor, while he tapped with the top of his cane against his teeth.

"You don't mean," said Mr. Aram, in a strangely different voice from which he had last spoken, "that you would do that?"

"Yes, I do," blustered the editor. But even as he spoke he was conscious of a sincere regret that he had not come alone. He could intuitively feel Bronson mapping out the story in his mind and memorizing Aram's every word, and taking mental notes of the framed certificates of high membership in different military and masonic associations which hung upon the walls. It had not been long since the editor was himself a reporter, and he could see that it was as good a story as Bronson

could wish it to be. But he reiterated, "Yes, I mean to give it to the papers to-night."

"But think," said Aram—"think, sir, who I am. You don't want to ruin me for the rest of my life just for a matter of fifteen dollars, do you? Fifteen dollars that no one has lost, either? If I'd embezzled a million or so, or if I had robbed the city, well and good! I'd have taken big risks for big money; but you are going to punish me just as hard because I tried to please my wife, as though I had robbed a mint. No one has really been hurt," he pleaded; "the men who wrote the poems—they've been paid for them; they've got all the credit for them they *can* get. You've not lost a cent. I've gained nothing by it; and yet you gentlemen are going to give this thing to the papers, and, as you say, sir, we know what they will make of it. What with my being my father's son, and all that, my father is going to suffer. My family is going to suffer. It will ruin me——"

The editor put the papers back into his pocket. If Bronson had not been there he might possibly instead have handed them over to Mr. Aram, and this story would never have been written. But he could not do that now. Mr. Aram's affairs had become the property of the New York newspaper.

He turned to his friend doubtfully. "What do you think, Bronson?" he asked.

At this sign of possible leniency Aram ceased in his rocking and sat erect, with eyes wide open and fixed on Bronson's face. But the latter trailed his stick over the rug beneath his feet and shrugged his shoulders.

"Mr. Aram," he said, "might have thought of his family and his father before he went into this business. It is rather late now. But," he added, "I don't think it is a matter we can decide in any event. It should be left to the firm."

"Yes," said the editor, hurriedly, glad of the excuse to temporize, "we must leave it to the house." But he read Bronson's answer to mean that he did not intend to let the plagiarist escape, and he knew that even were Bronson willing to do so, there was still his City Editor to be persuaded.

The two men rose and stood uncomfortably, shifting their hats in their hands—and avoiding each other's eyes. Mr. Aram stood up also, and seeing that his last chance had come, began again to plead desperately.

"What good would fifteen dollars do me?" he said, with a gesture of his hands round the room. "I don't have to look for money as hard as that. I tell you," he reiterated, "it wasn't the money I wanted. I didn't mean any harm. I didn't know it was wrong. I just wanted to please my wife—

that was all. My God, man, can't you see that you are punishing me out of all proportion?"

The visitors walked toward the door, and he followed them, talking the faster as they drew near to it. The scene had become an exceedingly painful one, and they were anxious to bring it to a close.

The editor interrupted him. "We will let you know," he said, "what we have decided to do by to-morrow morning."

"You mean," retorted the man, hopelessly and reproachfully, "that I will read it in the Sunday papers."

Before the editor could answer they heard the door leading into the apartment open and close, and someone stepping quickly across the hall to the room in which they stood. The entrance to the room was hung with a portière, and as the three men paused in silence this portière was pushed back, and a young lady stood in the doorway, holding the curtains apart with her two hands. She was smiling, and the smile lighted a face that was inexpressibly bright and honest and true. Aram's face had been lowered, but the eyes of the other two men were staring wide open toward the unexpected figure, which seemed to bring a taste of fresh pure air into the feverish atmosphere of the place. The girl stopped uncertainly when she saw

the two strangers, and bowed her head slightly as the mistress of a house might welcome anyone whom she found in her drawing-room. She was entirely above and apart from her surroundings. It was not only that she was exceedingly pretty, but that everything about her, from her attitude to her cloth walking-dress, was significant of good taste and high breeding.

She paused uncertainly, still smiling, and with her gloved hands holding back the curtains and looking at Aram with eyes filled with a kind confidence. She was apparently waiting for him to present his friends.

The editor made a sudden but irrevocable resolve. "If she is only a chance visitor," he said to himself, "I will still expose him; but if that woman in the doorway is his wife, I will push Bronson under the elevated train, and the secret will die with me."

What Bronson's thoughts were he could not know, but he was conscious that his friend had straightened his broad shoulders and was holding his head erect.

Aram raised his face, but he did not look at the woman in the door. "In a minute, dear," he said; "I am busy with these gentlemen."

The girl gave a little "oh" of apology, smiled at her husband's bent head, inclined her own again

slightly to the other men, and let the portière close behind her. It had been as dramatic an entrance and exit as the two visitors had ever seen upon the stage. It was as if Aram had given a signal, and the only person who could help him had come in the nick of time to plead for him. Aram, stupid as he appeared to be, had evidently felt the effect his wife's appearance had made upon his judges. He still kept his eyes fixed upon the floor, but he said, and this time with more confidence in his tone:—

"It is not, gentlemen, as though I were an old man. I have so very long to live—so long to try to live this down. Why, I am as young as you are. How would you like to have a thing like this to carry with you till you died?"

The editor still stood staring blankly at the curtains through which Mr. Aram's good angel, for whom he had lied and cheated in order to gain credit in her eyes, had disappeared. He pushed them aside with his stick. "We will let you know to-morrow morning," he repeated, and the two men passed out from the poet's presence, and on into the hall. They descended the stairs in an uncomfortable silence, Bronson leading the way, and the editor endeavoring to read his verdict by the back of his head and shoulders.

At the foot of the steps he pulled his friend by

the sleeve. "Bronson," he coaxed, "you are not going to use it, are you?"

Bronson turned on him savagely. "For Heaven's sake!" he protested, "what do you think I am; did you *see* her?"

So the New York —— lost a very good story, and Bronson a large sum of money for not writing it, and Mr. Aram was taught a lesson, and his young wife's confidence in him remained unshaken. The editor and reporter dined together that night, and over their cigars decided with sudden terror that Mr. Aram might, in his ignorance of their good intentions concerning him, blow out his brains, and for nothing. So they despatched a messenger-boy up town in post-haste with a note saying that "the firm" had decided to let the matter drop—although, perhaps, it would have been better to have given him one sleepless night at least.

That was three years ago, and since then Mr. Aram's father has fallen out with Tammany, and has been retired from public service. Bronson has been sent abroad to represent the United States at a foreign court, and has asked the editor to write the story that he did not write, but with such changes in the names of people and places that no one save Mr. Aram may know who Mr. Aram really was and is.

This the editor has done, reporting what happened as faithfully as he could, and in the hope that it will make an interesting story in spite of the fact, and not on account of the fact, that it is a true one.

AN ASSISTED EMIGRANT

An Assisted Emigrant

GUIDO stood on the curb-stone in Fourteenth Street, between Fifth Avenue and Sixth Avenue, with a row of plaster figures drawn up on the sidewalk in front of him. It was snowing, and they looked cold in consequence, especially the Night and Morning. A line of men and boys stretched on either side of Guido all along the curb-stone, with toys and dolls, and guns that shot corks into the air with a loud report, and glittering dressings for the Christmas-trees. It was the day before Christmas. The man who stood next in line to Guido had hideous black monkeys that danced from the end of a rubber string. The man danced up and down too, very much, so Guido thought, as the monkeys did, and stamped his feet on the icy pavement, and shouted: "Here yer are, lady, for five cents. Take them home to the children." There were hundreds and hundreds of ladies and little girls crowding by all of the time; some of them were a little cross and a little tired, as if Christmas shopping had told on their nerves, but the greater number were happy-looking and warm,

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and some stopped and laughed at the monkeys dancing on the rubber strings, and at the man with the frost on his mustache, who jumped too, and cried, "Only five cents, lady—nice Christmas presents for the children."

Sometimes the ladies bought the monkeys, but no one looked at the cold plaster figures of St. Joseph, and Diana, and Night and Morning, nor at the heads of Mars and Minerva—not even at the figure of the Virgin, with her two hands held out, which Guido pressed in his arms against his breast.

Guido had been in New York city just one month. He was very young—so young that he had never done anything at home but sit on the wharves and watch the ships come in and out of the great harbor of Genoa. He never had wished to depart with these ships when they sailed away, nor wondered greatly as to where they went. He was content with the wharves and with the narrow streets near by, and to look up from the bulkheads at the sailors working in the rigging, and the 'longshoremen rolling the casks on board, or lowering great square boxes into the holds.

He would have liked, could he have had his way, to live so for the rest of his life; but they would not let him have his way, and coaxed him on a ship to go to the New World to meet his

uncle. He was not a real uncle, but only a make-believe one, to satisfy those who objected to assisted immigrants, and who wished to be assured against having to support Guido, and others like him. But they were not half so anxious to keep Guido at home as he himself was to stay there.

The new uncle met him at Ellis Island, and embraced him affectionately, and put him in an express wagon, and drove him with a great many more of his countrymen to where Mulberry Street makes a bend and joins Hester. And in the Bend Guido found thousands of his fellows sleeping twenty in a room and overcrowded into the street; some who had but just arrived, and others who had already learned to swear in English, and had their street-cleaning badges and their pedler's licenses, to show that they had not been overlooked by the kindly society of Tammany, which sees that no free and independent voter shall go unrewarded.

New York affected Guido like a bad dream. It was cold and muddy, and the snow when it fell turned to mud so quickly that Guido believed they were one and the same. He did not dare to think of the place he knew as home. And the sight of the colored advertisements of the steamship lines that hung in the windows of the Italian bankers hurt him as the sound of traffic on the street cuts

to the heart of a prisoner in the Tombs. Many of his countrymen bade good-by to Mulberry Street and sailed away; but they had grown rich through obeying the padrones, and working night and morning sweeping the Avenue uptown, and by living on the refuse from the scows at Canal Street. Guido never hoped to grow rich, and no one stopped to buy his uncle's wares.

The electric lights came out, and still the crowd passed and thronged before him, and the snow fell and left no mark on the white figures. Guido was growing cold, and the bustle of the hurrying hundreds which had entertained him earlier in the day had ceased to interest him, and his amusement had given place to the fear that no one of them would ever stop, and that he would return to his uncle empty-handed. He was hungry now, as well as cold, and though there was not much rich food in the Bend at any time, to-day he had had nothing of any quality to eat since early morning. The man with the monkeys turned his head from time to time, and spoke to him in a language that he could not understand; although he saw that it was something amusing and well meant that the man said, and so smiled back and nodded. He felt it to be quite a loss when the man moved away.

Guido thought very slowly, but he at last began to feel a certain contempt for the stiff statues and

busts which no one wanted, and buttoned the figure of the one of the woman with her arms held out inside of his jacket, and tucked his scarf in around it, so that it might not be broken, and also that it might not bear the ignominy with the others of being overlooked. Guido was a gentle, slow-thinking boy, and could not have told you why he did this, but he knew that this figure was of different clay from the others. He had seen it placed high in the cathedrals at home, and he had been told that if you ask certain things of it it will listen to you.

The women and children began to disappear from the crowd, and the necessity of selling some of his wares impressed itself more urgently upon him as the night grew darker and possible customers fewer. He decided that he had taken up a bad position, and that instead of waiting for customers to come to him, he ought to go seek for them. With this purpose in his mind he gathered the figures together upon his tray, and, resting it upon his shoulder, moved further along the street, to Broadway, where the crowd was greater and the shops more brilliantly lighted. He had good cause to be watchful, for the sidewalks were slippery with ice, and the people rushed and hurried and brushed past him without noticing the burden he carried on one shoulder. He wished now that he

knew some words of this new language, that he might call his wares and challenge the notice of the passers-by, as did the other men who shouted so continually and vehemently at the hurrying crowds. He did not know what might happen if he failed to sell one of his statues; it was a possibility so awful that he did not dare conceive of its punishment. But he could do nothing, and so stood silent, dumbly presenting his tray to the people near him.

His wanderings brought him to the corner of a street, and he started to cross it, in the hope of better fortune in untried territory. There was no need of his hurrying to do this, although a car was coming toward him, so he stepped carefully but surely. But as he reached the middle of the track a man came toward him from the opposite pavement; they met and hesitated, and then both jumped to the same side, and the man's shoulder struck the tray and threw the white figures flying to the track, where the horses tramped over them on their way. Guido fell backward, frightened and shaken, and the car stopped, and the driver and the conductor leaned out anxiously from each end.

There seemed to be hundreds of people all around Guido, and some of them picked him up and asked him questions in a very loud voice, as

though that would make the language they spoke more intelligible. Two men took him by each arm and talked with him in earnest tones, and punctuated their questions by shaking him gently. He could not answer them, but only sobbed, and beat his hands softly together, and looked about him for a chance to escape. The conductor of the car jerked the strap violently, and the car went on its way. Guido watched the conductor, as he stood with his hands in his pockets looking back at him. Guido had a confused idea that the people on the car might pay him for the plaster figures which had been scattered in the slush and snow, so that the heads and arms and legs lay on every side or were ground into heaps of white powder. But when the car disappeared into the night he gave up this hope, and pulling himself free from his captor, slipped through the crowd and ran off into a side street. A man who had seen the accident had been trying to take up a collection in the crowd, which had grown less sympathetic and less numerous in consequence, and had gathered more than the plaster casts were worth; but Guido did not know this, and when they came to look for him he was gone, and the bareheaded gentleman, with his hat full of coppers and dimes, was left in much embarrassment.

Guido walked to Washington Square, and sat

down on a bench to rest, and then curled over quickly, and, stretching himself out at full length, wept bitterly. When anyone passed he held his breath and pretended to be asleep. He did not know what he was to do or where he was to go. Such a calamity as this had never entered into his calculations of the evils which might overtake him, and it overwhelmed him utterly. A policeman touched him with his night-stick, and spoke to him kindly enough, but the boy only backed away from the man until he was out of his reach, and then ran on again, slipping and stumbling on the ice and snow. He ran to Christopher Street, through Greenwich Village, and on to the wharves.

It was quite late, and he had recovered from his hunger, and only felt a sick tired ache at his heart. His feet were heavy and numb, and he was very sleepy. People passed him continually, and doors opened into churches and into noisy, glaring saloons and crowded shops, but it did not seem possible to him that there could be any relief from any source for the sorrow that had befallen him. It seemed too awful, and as impossible to mend as it would be to bring the crushed plaster into shape again. He considered dully that his uncle would miss him and wait for him, and that his anger would increase with every moment of his

delay. He felt that he could never return to his uncle again.

Then he came to another park, opening into a square, with lighted saloons on one side, and on the other great sheds, with ships lying beside them, and the electric lights showing their spars and masts against the sky. It had ceased snowing, but the air from the river was piercing and cold, and swept through the wires overhead with a ceaseless moaning. The numbness had crept from his feet up over the whole extent of his little body, and he dropped upon a flight of steps back of a sailors' boarding-house, and shoved his hands inside of his jacket for possible warmth. His fingers touched the figure he had hidden there and closed upon it lightly, and then his head dropped back against the wall, and he fell into a heavy sleep. The night passed on and grew colder, and the wind came across the ice-blocked river with shriller, sharper blasts, but Guido did not hear it.

"Chuckey" Martin, who blacked boots in front of the corner saloon in summer and swept out the barroom in winter, came out through the family entrance and dumped a pan of hot ashes into the snow-bank, and then turned into the house with a shiver. He saw a mass of something lying curled up on the steps of the next house, and remembered it after he had closed the door of the family en-

trance behind him and shoved the pan under the stove. He decided at last that it might be one of the saloon's customers, or a stray sailor with loose change in his pockets, which he would not miss when he awoke. So he went out again, and picking Guido up, brought him in in his arms and laid him out on the floor.

There were over thirty men in the place; they had been celebrating the coming of Christmas; and three of them pushed each other out of the way in their eagerness to pour very bad brandy between Guido's teeth. "Chuckey" Martin felt a sense of proprietorship in Guido, by the right of discovery, and resented this, pushing them away, and protesting that the thing to do was to rub his feet with snow.

A fat, oily chief engineer of an Italian tramp steamer dropped on his knees beside Guido and beat the boy's hands, and with unsteady fingers tore open his scarf and jacket, and as he did this the figure of the plaster Virgin with her hands stretched out looked up at him from its bed on Guido's chest.

Some of the sailors drew their hands quickly across their breasts, and others swore in some alarm, and the barkeeper drank the glass of whiskey he had brought for Guido at a gulp, and then readjusted his apron to show that nothing had dis-

turbed his equanimity. Guido sat up, with his head against the chief engineer's knees, and opened his eyes, and his ears were greeted with words in his own tongue. They gave him hot coffee and hot soup and more brandy, and he told his story in a burst of words that flowed like a torrent of tears—how he had been stolen from his home at Genoa, where he used to watch the boats from the stone pier in front of the custom-house, at which the sailors nodded, and how the padrone, who was not his uncle, finding he could not black boots nor sell papers, had given him these plaster casts to sell, and how he had whipped him when people would not buy them, and how at last he had tripped and broken them all except this one hidden in his breast, and how he had gone to sleep, and he asked now why had they wakened him, for he had no place to go.

Guido remembered telling them this, and following them by their gestures as they retold it to the others in a strange language, and then the lights began to spin, and the faces grew distant, and he reached out his hand for the fat chief engineer, and felt his arms tightening around him.

A cold wind woke Guido, and the sound of something throbbing and beating like a great clock. He was very warm and tired and lazy, and when he raised his head he touched the ceiling close

above him, and when he opened his eyes he found himself in a little room with a square table covered with oilcloth in the centre, and rows of beds like shelves around the walls. The room rose and fell as the streets did when he had had nothing to eat, and he scrambled out of the warm blankets and crawled fearfully up a flight of narrow stairs. There was water on either side of him, beyond and behind him—water blue and white and dancing in the sun, with great blocks of dirty ice tossing on its surface.

And behind him lay the odious city of New York, with its great bridge and high buildings, and before him the open sea. The chief engineer crawled up from the engine-room and came toward him, rubbing the perspiration from his face with a dirty towel.

"Good-morning," he called out. "You are feeling pretty well?"

"Yes."

"It is Christmas day. Do you know where you are going? You are going to Italy, to Genoa. It is over there," he said, pointing with his finger. "Go back to your bed and keep warm."

He picked Guido up in his arms, and ran with him down the companion-way, and tossed him back into his berth. Then he pointed to the shelf at one end of the little room, above the sheet-iron

stove. The plaster figure that Guido had wrapped in his breast had been put there and lashed to its place.

"That will bring us good luck and a quick voyage," said the chief engineer.

Guido lay quite still until the fat engineer had climbed up the companion-way again and permitted the sunlight to once more enter the cabin. Then he crawled out of his berth and dropped on his knees, and raised up his hands to the plaster figure which no one would buy.

Date Due

Jan 6, '41

WITHDRAWN

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